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- HOW TO REPLACE IT

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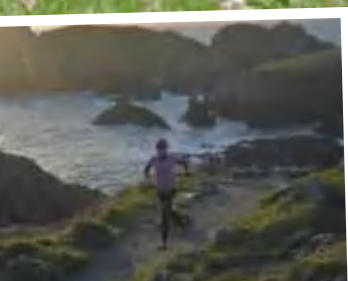
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Tim Don
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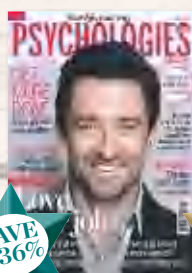


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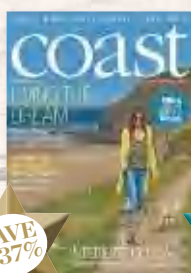
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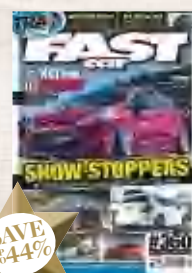
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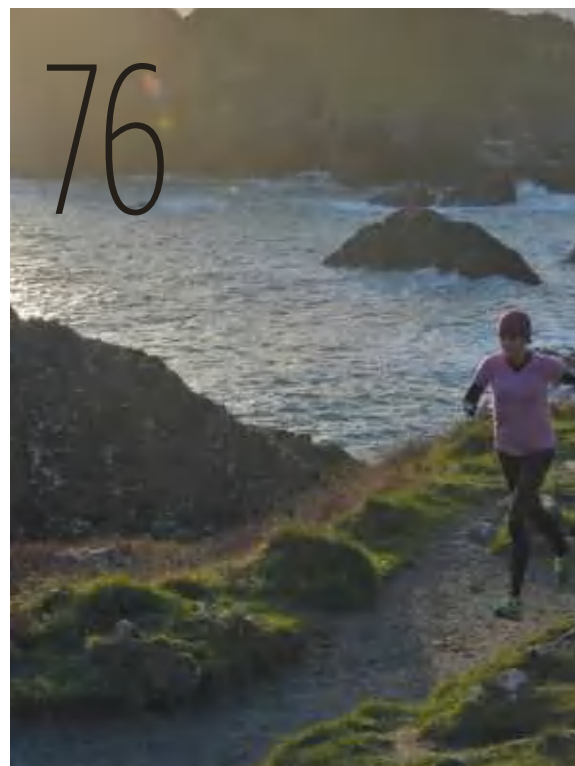
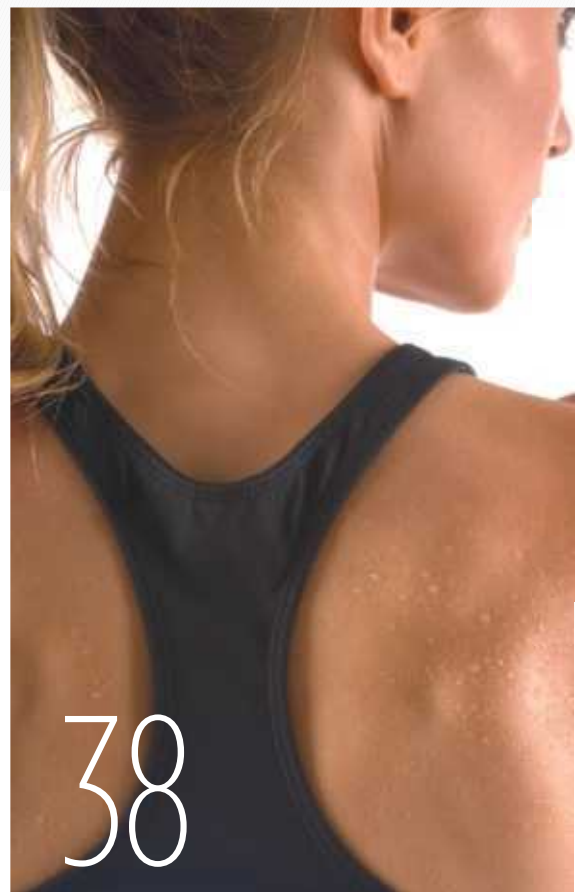
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92 EVENTS LISTING

Upcoming races for the end of 2015 as well as the new year.

WELCOME



Winter is a really good time to get to grips with training techniques and race preparation. If the weather's just too disgusting to go out, you can still get some really good work done foam rolling, going through some yoga poses or working through some injury-prevention exercises. If you're getting to grips with a foam roller, try

our exercise of the month on p21, which gives you three ways to work your legs. It'll be painful but it'll be worth it!

We've even taken care of keeping you occupied on a rest day with some easy recipes for **home made energy snacks** on p54; you'll save a fortune on shop-bought bars and drinks, and get some personal satisfaction out of it too – we'd love to see photos if you do try your hand at them. If you're out and about **training for spring races** you might benefit from Sarah's heart-rate zone training feature on p28. It's a great way to mix up your sessions and you'll see noticeable results really quickly. Finally, it seems odd to say this now, but I'd like to wish all of our readers a **very happy Christmas break**. Next issue will be on sale in the new year and I'm looking forward to helping you burn off those mince pies!

AMY CURTIS, EDITOR

 **VISIT** runningfitnessmag.com for more news and insightful content, blogs and our favourite articles



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3 THINGS YOU NEED TO KNOW THIS MONTH...

P35 Yoga could help you recover more quickly from a long run. Helen Clare, yoga teacher and runner, shows us her favourite post-run poses.



P42 A chronic illness might not mean the end of your running enjoyment. We meet three runners who overcame diagnosis to carry on with what they love.

P54 You can make your own energy snacks and save money. Find great recipes – some don't even require an oven!



THIS MONTH'S CONTRIBUTORS



MATT PHILLIPS:
The *Running Fitness* in-house physio specialist takes us through some great foam rolling exercises. p21



DR YVETTE BRINDLE:
Our favourite GP offers great advice on that delicate subject of post-pregnancy incontinence. p61



GEORGE WINTER:
George takes a closer look at all angles of sweat this month – why we need it and how to manage it. p38



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²With HRM-Run

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A man in a black running shirt, black shorts, and yellow running shoes is running on a grassy hill. He is wearing sunglasses and has a backpack. In the background, there is a coastline with a blue sea and a white sandy beach. The landscape is green and hilly, with a fence line visible in the foreground.

JURASSIC COAST CHALLENGE

The Jurassic Coast Challenge takes place 18-20 March 2016. The format is a marathon a day for three days along some of the most stunning coastline in the UK; 78.6 miles in total. Open to runners, joggers and walkers it presents a realistic challenge for everyone and there is even a relay option available. The event is well known for its spectacular views, challenging hills and amazing organisation. Find out more at votwo.co.uk.



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GRAND EAST ANGLIA RUN

SUNDAY 1ST MAY 2016, 10.45 AM
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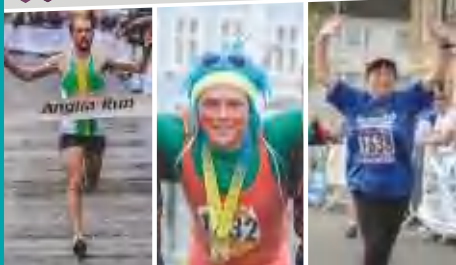
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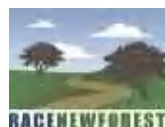
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**Lake Swim 400mtr, Cycle 21miles,
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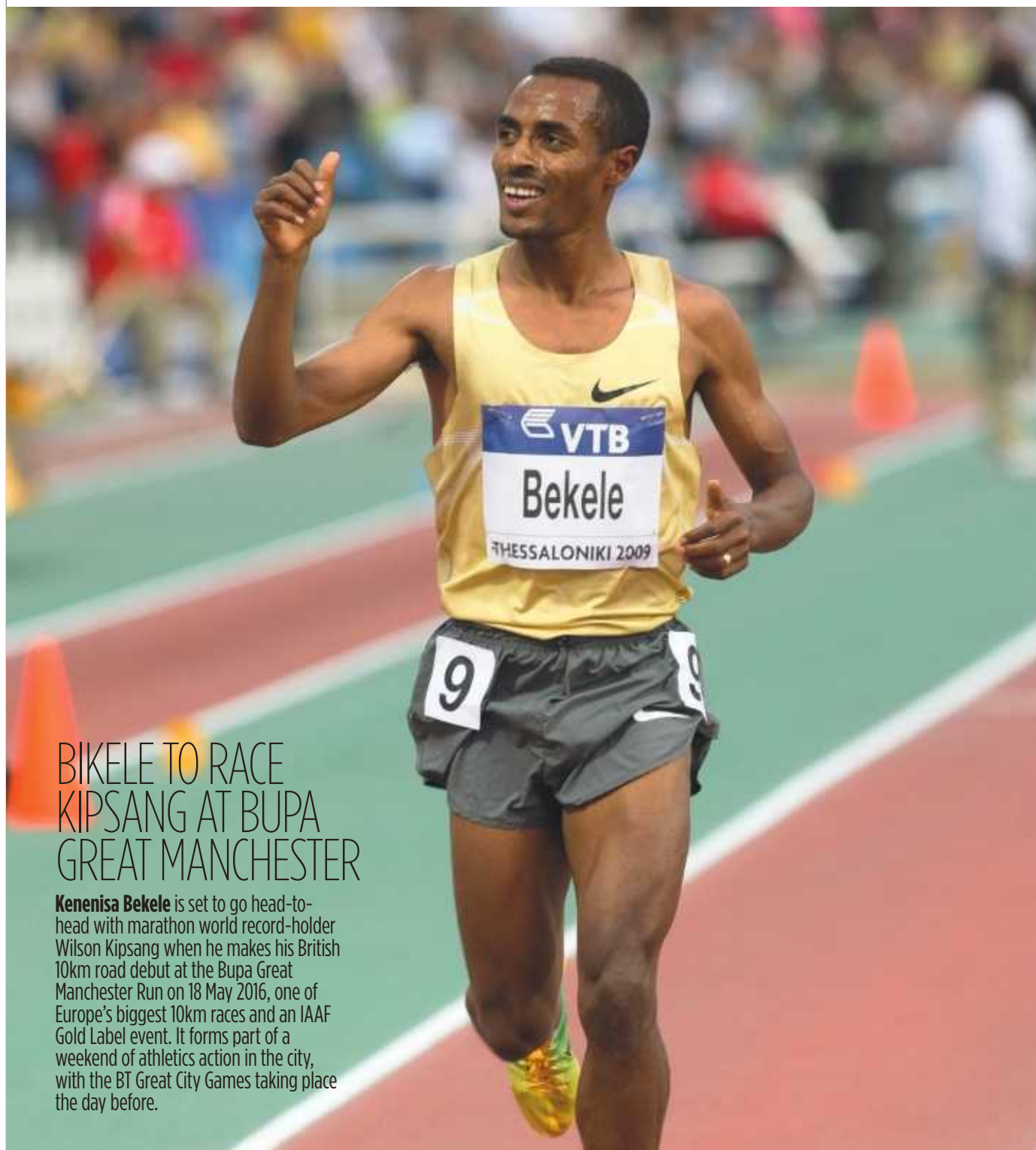


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THIS MONTH

Why Bangkok half-marathon runners got **MORE THAN THEY BARGAINED FOR**, advice from Prof Greg Whyte, plus evidence that carbs might not be the answer after all...



BIKELE TO RACE KIPSANG AT BUPA GREAT MANCHESTER

Kenenisa Bekele is set to go head-to-head with marathon world record-holder Wilson Kipsang when he makes his British 10km road debut at the Bupa Great Manchester Run on 18 May 2016, one of Europe's biggest 10km races and an IAAF Gold Label event. It forms part of a weekend of athletics action in the city, with the BT Great City Games taking place the day before.



NEW YEAR FITNESS TIPS

Don't wait until next year to start your fitness kick says ex-Olympian rower Toby Garbett. He says you can start by:

1 IMPROVING BAD FORM

Try to focus on doing exercises correctly.

2 TAKING FITNESS OF THE PEDESTAL

Turn 'grand plans to get fit' into realistic, bite-sized action.

3 WARMING UP There are many ways to warm up, but it's key to performing well. Start slow or build in warm-up exercises.

4 NOT GETTING TOO COMFORTABLE

Always be prepared to work hard and don't worry about feeling a little pain; it's ok, it means it's working!

5 SETTING ACHIEVABLE GOALS

Write down your realistic objectives; make them achievable and break them down into bite size chunks. What are you waiting for?

Could carb-loading be a thing of the past?

Elite endurance athletes on low carb diets burned more than twice as much fat as athletes on high-carb diets during maximum exertion, finds new research from The Ohio State University. The results were reported as the highest fat-burning rates under these conditions ever seen by researchers. "Maybe we've got it all backwards and we need to re-examine everything we've been telling athletes for the last 40 years about loading up on carbs. Clearly it's not as straightforward as we used to think," said lead researcher Jeff Volek. "This represents a real paradigm shift in sports nutrition, and I don't use that term lightly."



ERROR TURNS BANGKOK RACE INTO WORLD'S LONGEST HALF

Instead of a 13-mile run through Thailand's capital, the Standard Chartered Bangkok marathon on 15 November accidentally extended its annual half-marathon to almost 17 miles! The Jogging Association of Thailand, one of two organisers of the race, admitted to the error on Monday. "The association apologises for the mistake," Songrakm Kraison, its vice-president, told the Associated Press. Some 6,000 runners took part in the race and everyone will get a special jersey saying, 'Finisher of 27.6 km', honouring runners who ran in the longer version of the half-marathon.

IMAGE: SHUTTERSTOCK.COM



Fit legs, fit brain, study suggests

Older women who have strong legs are likely to fare better when it comes to ageing of the brain, say researchers from King's College London. Leg power (extension, speed, strength) and brain power (memory/mental processing) was

measured for more 150+ twin sisters aged 43-73 and lead researcher Dr Claire Steves said: "When it came to cognitive ageing, leg strength was the strongest factor that had an impact in our study." The study is published in *Gerontology*.



AFRAID OF SUCCESS?

Professor Greg Whyte says fear of success is as common as fear of failure and shares the same symptoms. In sport, people often fear success of achieving short/medium term goals, as they can see it as pressure of having to achieve long term goals; and many self-sabotage as a result. When it comes to the fear of success, he recommends writing, visualising and self-talk as key to turning negatives into positives (reported by *Athletics Weekly* online).

PERSONALISE YOUR DIET, FINDS NEW RESEARCH

Which is more likely to raise blood sugar levels: sushi or ice cream? According to researchers from the Weizmann Institute of Science, the answer varies from one person to another. The study, published in the journal *Cell*, has confirmed the importance of a personalised diet based on complex factors such as your gut microbes and lifestyle – in that the foods that raise blood sugar levels differ dramatically from person to person.



THIS MONTH'S NEWS IN BRIEF

A few of our favourite snippets from the news this month

» KIDS RUN A MILE TO CELEBRATE 100,000TH RUNNER

Go Run For Fun is a children's running charity whose mission is to get children off the couch to be more active. The campaign was founded in 2013 with the target of reaching 100,000 children by 2016, which it has achieved. On Tues 24 November over 1,000 children from local schools took part in the charity's one mile event at Wavertree Athletics Centre, Liverpool, to celebrate. They were joined by World 60m gold medallist Richard Kilty and a number of celebrities.



» SURREY DOCTOR FINISHES 20TH IN NYC MARATHON

Kojo Kyereme, 40, who works as Cardiac Physiology Manager at Spire St Anthony's Hospital, in Cheam, Surrey, was the 20th runner (out of almost 50,000) to cross the line in the New York City Marathon in November, running a pb of 2:26:17! "I'm over the moon at coming 20th position. I underestimated the difficulty of the course which is much more hilly than the London Marathon with steep bridges. I enjoyed the experience with the enthusiastic crowd (including my friends!) encouraging me. My wife couldn't be there, but she followed my progress on an App," said Kojo, who earlier this year was named World Masters M40 10,000 metres Champion in Lyon, France. Kojo is planning to compete in the Berlin Marathon in Germany next September.

POSTBOX

We'd love to hear your views, news and reviews

Running Fitness



SEND YOUR THOUGHTS ON ALL THINGS RUNNING

TO: AMY CURTIS, Editor, *Running Fitness*

magazine, Kelsey Media, Cudham Tithe Barn,

Berry's Hill, Cudham, Kent TN16 3AG



CONTACT BY EMAIL ON: rf.ed@kelsey.co.uk



Following a training plan can bring great results, whatever your standard.

LETTER OF THE MONTH

I bought my first ever issue of *Running Fitness* in August and have been hooked ever since.

I had entered Hell Up North and decided to follow your 12-week smash it in plan for half marathons as I liked the gym aspect and am a keen mountain biker.

Although I have only run one half marathon, which was about fifteen years ago, I have been running for 30 years and thought the plan looked

good to follow. I felt compelled to write to you and thank you as without it I don't think I would have done so well. It really was tough but I have achieved my best results in years from following it with a first-in-age category in 10ks to 26th out of 467 women in Hellrunner. So thank you, I look forward each month to your magazine it is truly inspirational and motivational.

Kindest regards,

Milly Bentley

OUR LETTER OF THE MONTH WINNER CAN CHOOSE BETWEEN THIS FABULOUS ANITA SPORTS BRA (AMAZON.CO.UK RRP £50) OR TWO SETS OF MEN'S RUNNING BOXERS FROM RUNDERWEAR (RUNDERWEAR.CO.UK, RRP £36)



FITTER AND STRONGER

I've been reading *Running Fitness* for about two years and always skipped over any articles about yoga as I thought it was a bit 'girly'. Then a friend of mine was chatting to me about how they tried yoga after suffering an injury and never looked

back – he told me he feels stronger and gets much more out of running now he's combining it with a session or two of yoga each week. So when I saw the step-by-step yoga poses aimed at improving balance in the October issue of *RF*, I decided to give them a go. I've been really

quite pleased with the results so far and am even looking into joining a proper class this winter. I would recommend other readers giving it a go, even if you think it's 'new-age claptrap' like I did – you might be surprised!

James Lakey



YOUR TWEETS THIS MONTH

@runtoryrun "12km run this morning, it really is winter! Hats, gloves, long legs all on! Bring back the sun, shorts & vests!!!"

@thisbrokenglass "Bit chilly today. Snow way for a run!"

@Gazz_Long "Top runner, top guy." [In response to our Inspiring Runner story on Daniel Page]

@mandyR33 "16 miler .. chilly this morning.."

JOIN THE CONVERSATION
[@Runfitmag](https://twitter.com/Runfitmag)



ON FACEBOOK THIS MONTH

We asked what's your favourite winter kit?

Tim Lowe: "Microfibre gloves."

Sarah Russell: "Easy.. my Dexshell waterproof socks smile amazing things."

Fiona Terris: "A buff."

Ashley Sayer: "Treadmill."

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SARAH RUSSELL

Why do you run?

Take a moment to **THINK ABOUT** your reasons for running. You may be surprised at what you find out

Non-runners might think we do it to lose weight or because we're mad, or because we want to train for a race or to raise money for charity. But is that the real reason? Do you know why you run? It's not always obvious.

For me, running is about adventure, peace, solitude, being at one with nature, and just to have a bit of thinking time. I enjoy races too, but it's more about sharing the experience with others, rather than beating anyone or getting a new PB. I also love running with my husband, my group, with friends, my kids. It makes me feel alive. Sometimes I run... just because I can.

But it has not always been that way. If someone had ask me this question 10 years ago, I might have said to keep slim, to win races, to push myself, to get a new PB, to

find out my limits and to perform to the best of my ability. How times change.

BE HAPPY

It took a life-threatening illness and major abdominal surgery for me to really 'get' running. My appreciation for running has changed. I'm not entirely sure I used to love running in the way I do today. Now I really do love running. I appreciate every muddy step and I'll never take it for granted.

It's easy to get sucked into the drive to perform, to constantly push yourself and never be happy with your achievements. And I'm not sure that makes for a happy or healthy runner. Standing on the finish line of the Brighton 10km, I had run 10 minutes slower than my PB there six years ago. But I was really happy with the run. I felt strong and I'd run with a friend who had done well in his first 10km. It was fun and I really

enjoyed the whole experience. But on the finish line I overheard so many people saying things like "Oh I wasn't happy with my time" or "That was a bad run" or "Gutted.. that was slower than last time". Happy runners? Hardly.

A RUNNING RELATIONSHIP

Instead of beating yourself up for a slow time, try to keep things in perspective and take the pressure off. Of course it's fine to strive to run faster and get a PB, but at the same time make an effort to be more present and enjoy the process. Be proud of your achievements and enjoy the moment.

It might be a cliché but it can all be gone in a blink of an eye. Try to enjoy every breathless, sweaty, muddy moment – you never know when your last run will be.

So take a moment to reflect. Why do you really run? What do you get out of it? Think a little deeper than the superficial answers such as, "It keeps me slim", or "It means I can eat cake without guilt". (Although this may be true as well!) When you really and truly understand your relationship with running, you'll enjoy it a lot more; and you'll probably find you'll end up with a lifelong love affair with our wonderful sport.

Running is about adventure, peace, solitude and being at one with nature. It's not all about getting a faster time

Tweet us at @runfitmag and let us know why YOU run?

Sarah Russell has over 20 years experience in the fitness industry as a running coach, trainer, freelance writer and athlete. She also has a Masters degree in Sport Science and is a qualified England Athletics running coach sarah-russell.co.uk

TOP TIP HOW TO TAKE CARE OF MUDDY TRAIL SHOES:



X Don't put them in the washing machine, that doesn't do the machine or your shoes any good. One option is to leave the mud to dry, then brush it off later, but this can leave shoes hard and stiff. However... I've discovered this great

trick and it works really well:

✓ Wear waterproof socks, such as Dexshell, for your run (optional). Leave your muddy shoes on your feet then use a hosepipe to wash your shoes off – while you're

still wearing them!

✓ Stuff your shoes with newspaper or use a pair of Stuffits and leave to dry.

Your shoes will be clean and mud-free ready for your next run.



The Big Running Survey

A ground-breaking study is currently being done by Warwick University on 'Why we run'. It'll be the biggest survey ever done looking at the reasons behind running and our behaviours. It only takes five minutes to complete the survey online and the researchers want as many runners of all abilities to complete it as possible. Be part of it.
bigrunningsurvey.co.uk

Take time to think about why you run, and you may be jumping with joy at your new relationship with the sport.

WHAT'S ON IN MARCH?

The running diary is jam packed in March and you'll be spoilt for choice. Here's our pick of what's on:

HASTINGS HALF MARATHON

DATE: Sunday 20 March

One of the UK's oldest half marathons, Hastings offers an undulating yet fast course, lots of support and great organisation.

hastings-half.co.uk

GROUNDHOG MARATHON, SHROPSHIRE

DATE: Saturday 5 March

Can you handle running 105.5 laps of a running track in Shropshire to complete a marathon?

codrc.co.uk

JURASSIC COAST CHALLENGE 3 MARATHONS IN 3 DAYS

DATE: Friday 18 March

Run, walk or crawl a marathon a day for three days along the beautiful Jurassic Coastal Path. Stunning scenery and impeccable organisation.

votwo.co.uk

COMING UP...

HIGH ATLAS MOUNTAINS RUNNING/HIKING TRIP

DATE: 10-17 May £650 (if booked this year) plus flights.

Join experienced running coach and guide Howard Chambers and a team of Berber guides in Morocco's Atlas mountains for high-altitude hiking or running.

Email info@howardchambersservices.co.uk for details.



3 OF THE BEST... HYDRATION DRINKS

A NEW GENERATION OF SPORTS DRINK is entering the market and savvy runners are catching on. Ditch those sugary sports drinks and reach for a hydration product instead. These new drinks have less carbohydrate and more electrolytes than traditional sports drinks and are designed for optimum hydration

1

SOS Rehydrate

£7.99 for 10 sachets.
Available in berry, mango and citrus flavours
sosrehydrate.com



2

Skratch Labs

£13.95 for 454g pouch.
All natural product.
Wide range of flavours.
Daily hydration mix and Exercise mix available.
skratchlabs.com



3

Osmo Nutrition

£15.99 for 400g tub.
Available in men's and women's formulas as well as a unique 'pre-load' formula.
osmonutrition.com



OWAIN THOMAS

To support a good friend suffering from cancer, Owain devised a **250-MILE ULTRA MARATHON** stretching from Southampton to Land's End. And he ran it in seven days!

I used to be severely overweight and I struggled to run one mile of a seven-mile charity obstacle event. It was then I decided to enter again and train a little for the next year. I then also won a ballot place in 2010 London Marathon and lost almost eight stone training properly six days a week. I haven't looked back since!

Work is a priority being in the Royal Navy but due to the nature of my current role in a shore base, I get to train when I am working shifts. Family life has been pretty tough; I have tried very hard to train with very little impact where I can, and training during a night shift helps with that. So many events this year have meant a lot of going away but my wife and boy make an awesome support crew.

7 ULTRAS CHALLENGE

One day, a good friend gave me the worst news: he had terminal cancer. Given that he is only a little younger and like me has a young family, it hit home how short life really can be. I came up with the idea of a running event for myself to raise money for Ochre – The Oesophageal Cancer Charity, which may assist others in the future (justgiving.com/yolo7dayultra2015). Seven ultra marathons in seven days (3-9 August 2015), running from the New Forest to Land's End: 250 miles of a brutal route with 16,500ft of climb, plus dicing with traffic. The #YOLO7dayUltra was born.

DAY 1 New Forest – Dorchester

DAY 2 Dorchester – Honiton

DAY 3 Honiton – Torquay

DAY 4 Torquay – Devonport

DAY 5 Devonport – Lanhydrock House (Bodmin)

DAY 6 Lanhydrock House – Blackwater (including parkrun)

DAY 7 Blackwater – Land's End

The time came, and with a support crew to get me through each day, plus X-Bionic

and Sunwise providing me with awesome kit, I didn't hold back. I started on the Monday and two ultra running friends got me through the first two days. The second day was tough due to the hill climbs and temperature. The third day was the hardest due to being alone for the majority of it, with rubbish weather and the legs not wanting to run; I wanted to give up. I didn't, though, and smashed through the next few days with help from various runners.

On the sixth day I even threw in a parkrun (which happened to be the second toughest in the UK) just for added measure. The final day I was surrounded by runners of various abilities, including my best friend who doesn't run. He managed 21 miles before he stopped and some runners who only usually run a few miles completed all 33.6 miles of the last day. I had inspired people to push their limits for my friend, to raise awareness and money for Ochre. When I finished there was nothing but pure relief.

Apart from all the support and other runners pushing their limits because I was, the main highlight was kindness from one runner on day three – the worst day. Hearing I was struggling that day, she came out to help me finish the last 10k, despite being injured. I had met her during a trail half marathon where I sacrificed my run to help her finish as she was struggling. She returned the favour and it showed me how great the running world can be.

PERSONAL ENDURANCE

This year alone I plan on completing 37 events in total. So far to date, including #YOLO7dayUltra (as 1 event), I've completed 30. These vary from 5ks to ultra marathons. Despite suffering from whooping cough (yep, as an adult) I dragged myself round the Paris Marathon, Hope24 Ultra, Equinox24 Ultra and various half marathons.

In the six years I've been running, I've been injured twice. I've experienced Iliotibial

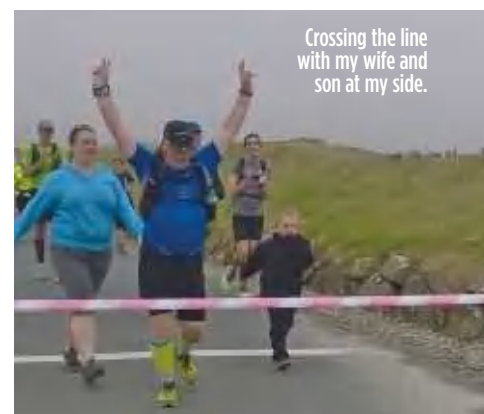
Band Syndrome (ITBS), but by changing from a heel striker to pose, I stopped overpronating and became a neutral runner and have not suffered since. Two weeks before my seven ultras challenge, I suffered from a swollen ankle after a Endure12/50 Ultra; I didn't recover prior to the challenge but sports massage therapy since has solved the issue. Otherwise, as you would expect, I picked up the usual blisters, swollen feet and knees during the 250 miles of tarmac bashing. If my feet could talk they'd tell me they hate me.

MOTIVATION

I mainly run around the Plymouth area with friends. I'm also a member of Plymouth Musketeers and I run with the Sweatshop Running Community. So it's not often I run by myself if I can help it. If I'm running with others, we talk about anything and everything. If I am running by myself then I try not to think about much, and blank out stresses of life; if I am thinking of something it might be the next event or food.

Regardless of where I am running, I take in the scenery. I've run at the Arctic circle and would love to go back some day.

At the moment my friend is my motivation to keep running; he's my mantra. While he's still fighting I'm still running. Otherwise, the incentive would be the events I've entered in. I once heard the founder of Barkley Ultra say, "you haven't tested your limits until you've tried something you can't do." Well, I still haven't tested mine yet.



Crossing the line with my wife and son at my side.

Find out more at <http://owainthomas78.wix.com/yolo7dayultra> make a donation at justgiving.com/yolo7dayultra2015
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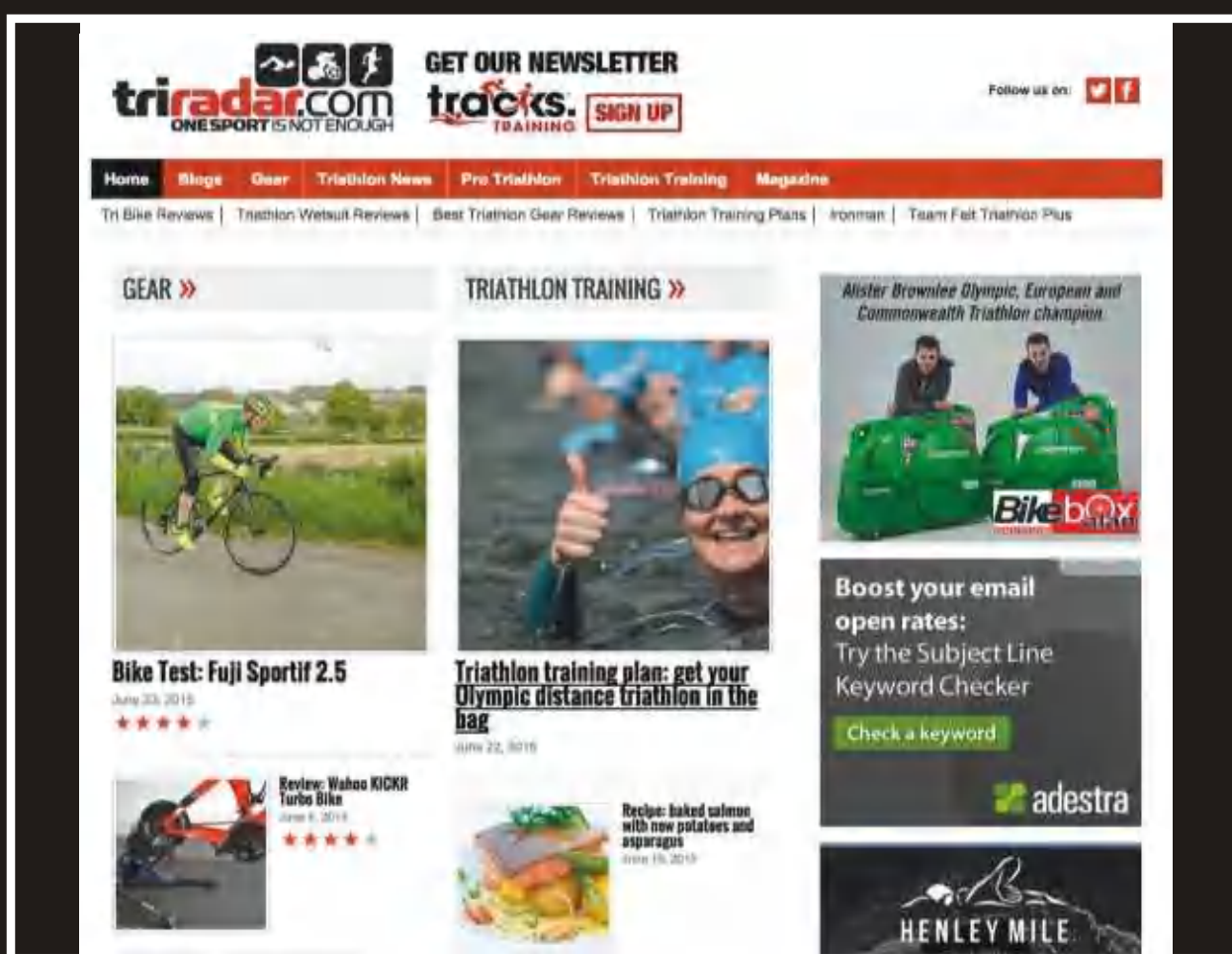


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motivation... while
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MATT PHILLIPS

INJURY SPECIALIST

Each issue Matt Phillips shares a new exercise. Part 2 of the **FOAM ROLLING** technique will help ease your quads, glutes and adductor muscles

TARGET MUSCLES: Quads (thighs), glutes (buttocks), adductors (inner thigh)

SETS & REPS: 2-3 minutes each

TEMPO: Slow, avoid pain of over 6/10

FREQUENCY: Evenings (in front of the TV)

Last month, we looked at foam rolling the calves. Many runners find that regular rolling helps them when they're in rehab but also to avoid injury.

This month, we look at ways of rolling the quadriceps (front thigh muscles), the glutes (buttocks), and adductors (inner thighs). Place your body weight on to the roller, and look for "knots" in the muscle. These knots are thought

to be adhesions in the fascia (the fibrous layer that surrounds muscles) that appear in response to injury or inactivity. They may prevent normal muscle mechanics by reducing joint range of motion, muscle tone and length, leading to decreased strength, endurance and coordination. Foam rolling helps remove these restrictions and restore normal muscle mechanics.

THE QUADS



1 Place roller under the quad muscles. Start to roll backwards and forwards, but do not roll over the knee cap.



2 Rotate the legs so your feet point outwards to look for sensitive areas on the inner part of your thighs.



3 Rotate the legs so your feet point inwards to look for sensitive areas on the outer side of your thighs.

THE GLUTES



1 Place the edge of the foam roller under one of your glutes (buttocks).



2 Lower your weight on to the edge of the roller. Roll backwards and forwards until you find an area of increased sensitivity.



3 Using a spiky ball instead of a roller allows you to roll in a circular fashion, which may uncover new areas of tension.

THE ADDUCTORS



1 Lying on your front, place the roller to the side of your body and raise one leg up on to it.



2 Lower your weight on to it and look for areas of increased sensitivity up the inner thigh. Avoid rolling too close to the knee or groin.

TOP TIPS

» Foam rolling can be painful, especially if it is your first time. Subjecting your body to too much pain is never good as it can provoke your nervous system to become over-sensitive and create more pain. If the pain is too great, adjust your body position to reduce the discomfort.
» Effective rolling requires a few minutes of searching for sensitive areas followed by dedicated rolling on that area, not just a quick 20 seconds.

FOR VIDEOS OF HOW TO DO OUR EXERCISES OF THE MONTH, go to runningfitnessmag.com

MATT PHILLIPS

is a running injury specialist and video gait analyst at StrideUK & Studio57clinic in Sussex. Follow Matt on Twitter: [@sportinjurymatt](https://twitter.com/sportinjurymatt)
StrideUK is one of the UK's leading running technique companies which takes pride in helping people reduce injury, and improve running performance by using clinical video gait analysis to examine your running technique and provide simple, easy-to-follow training programmes to get you injury free. For more information visit strideuk.com

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LAURA FOUNTAIN

LAZY GIRL RUNNING

Struck by injury, Laura has spent more time recently **WATCHING OTHER PEOPLE RUN** than racing herself. And yet she has discovered there is still a lot of enjoyment to be had from the sidelines

For the past five years I've run the half-marathon in my home town. It was the first half-marathon I ever ran, and every year I return to take part. Sometimes I run it fast, sometimes I run it slower, but every year I go back and run it. Until this year.

Like most runners will at some point, I've picked up an injury that has forced me to take a break from running. It can be frustrating not to be able to do the thing you love. I've been jealous of random people I've seen out running while I've been sitting in a café consoling myself with a hot chocolate. I thought: "It's so unfair," and "Why me?" But not this time.

SUPER SPECTATOR

My sister had been training all year for the Great Eastern Run in Peterborough. It was her first half-marathon, and I was supposed to run it with her. But my leg had been hurting for a while, and the only thing that was going to make it better was a few weeks off. So instead of competing, I bundled into the car with my mum, several packs of jelly babies and a home-made banner ready to spectate. If I couldn't run I was going to be the best supporter on the course.

After several years of cheering me on, my parents have become masters of navigating a city on lockdown for a closed-road half-marathon, using shortcuts and local knowledge to get to five points on the course. We arrived at each point to see the same runners going past each time, put up our banner and hand out sweets. We saw my sister safely round the course and I had as much fun cheering the race as I have previously had running it. I forgot all about my injured leg for a couple of hours.

MOUNTAINSIDE CHEERS

A couple of weeks later, I headed back to Wales for the Snowdonia Marathon. I ran this race with a friend last year and we had so much fun that we signed up



Laura and her mum cheered Emma on when she ran her first half marathon.



Being cheered on by smiling spectators can really boost the spirits during a tough race.



LAURA FOUNTAIN

Laura Fountain is a marathon and ultra runner, a triathlete and a personal trainer. She teaches beginners how to run and helps them fall in love with running.

Follow Laura on Twitter:
@lazygirlrunning

again, with a few extra friends. Unfortunately, injury and illness put three of us out of the race, but we all headed to Wales anyway.

The Snowdonia Marathon is a beautiful but challenging race, and we knew our four friends who were running it would need all the support we could give. So after seeing them off to the start, we fuelled ourselves with a massive breakfast before hiking up the last few miles of the race.

From mile 22 the race goes up a huge hill for two miles before coming back down the other side towards the finish. As we hiked, we cheered on runners who'd been out in the elements for a good few hours. You don't expect to see many spectators half-way up a mountain, so our cheers were well received.

CAMARADERIE WINS

It can be tempting, when faced with injury, to shut yourself off from running; to not want to watch people taking part in a race that you were supposed to run. But, although being injured has been frustrating, I have enjoyed the races I was unable to run. For me, races are best enjoyed with friends, and that doesn't change just because you're on the sidelines.



I had as much fun cheering the race as I have previously had running it

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DAN TYE

REACH NEW HEIGHTS

Frequent travelling and commuting can disrupt your running programme, but even if you end up in a town or city there's **ALWAYS** a running adventure to be had

I have lost count of the times when I have gone away and wished I had packed my running kit. To avoid the umming and ahing over whether I should take it or not, I now just set a default mode of packing it anyway. Even if I know for certain that I won't have time to run, I can guarantee an opportunity will crop up if I don't pack it.

Take a recent four-day trip to Copenhagen. I had visions of being all cultured, slurping coffee and munching on Kanelsnegle (cinnamon rolls). I was also aware how well the Danes dress, so packing a pair of trainers in my carry-on luggage would limit what I could/couldn't take for 'proper clothes'. But I still put a tweet out asking others for advice on where I should run in Copenhagen.

ROUTE TWEET

The reply came from Annie Ross, tweeting from @exerkyourself. Annie has set out to complete 52 sporting challenges in 52 weeks, so her ethos fits in perfectly with why I started Adventure 52 (see bio). Annie's strapline on her Twitter page is "Helping busy people to stay active" and after a few tweets back and forth, she gave me this advice for a run: "For sightseeing: out to Little Mermaid via fortress, thru parks, Oster Sogade lake, meat packing district."

I looked for these places on a map, marked where my hotel was and soon I was able to piece together a route through the city, to the fortress and to the Little Mermaid statue. My hotel wasn't far from the meat packing district and I went to dinner at a restaurant called Mother there – well worth going. I had already seen the Little Mermaid statue on a boat cruise; made of bronze she sits on a rock overlooking the sea and was presented to the city by the Danish brewer (founder of Carlsberg) Carl Jacobsen in 1913. Carl loved the Hans Christian Andersen tale of *The Little Mermaid* and commissioned sculptor Edvard Eriksen to make the statue. Eriksen then based the body of the mermaid on his wife.

AM I THE ONLY ONE?

So I set out from the Urban House hotel, map in hand, past the train station, past the famous Tivoli entertainment park and through the city. It wasn't long before I was getting funny looks. It took me a while to work out why; no one else seems to run here, they all cycle. And my run had coincided with the morning rush hour of trendy, beautiful Danes all cycling to work. I had my first sight of a fellow runner as I neared the fortress. Phew, I'm not the only crazy one here then. Not long after that there were a few



The picturesque turnaround point beside the bronze statue of The Little Mermaid.



DAN TYE

took a love of cross-country running and outdoor pursuits with him into the RAF as a pilot. The call of the mountains was too great though and he became a ski instructor in Canada, before working as a journalist for the past 10 years. He now edits an online adventure lifestyle blog called Adventure 52, where he encourages everyone to make the most of his or her 52 weeks a year. Find him at: @Adventure52mag or adventure52.com

more, all aiming for the Little Mermaid statue as their turnaround point. As I arrived at the statue, there was a young English couple already there, smiling and shivering in their sweaty T-shirts. I snapped a photo of the Little Mermaid, and then set back through the park and the city, taking in the sights, in particular the wonderful colours of the leaves on the trees under a bright blue Danish sky.

Morning sunlight in autumn spreads a warming orange glow wherever you are in the world, but I have to say that seeing it flow over the coloured buildings and wooden yachts in Copenhagen's New Harbour (Nyhavn) is one of best city sights I have seen. I couldn't help but think of Carl Jacobsen as I ran past the many bars and restaurants on my way back; probably the best city run in the world.

My tip then for 2016 is this: always take your running kit. I'm sure many runners already do, but even the most ardent of us can be tempted to give it a rest for a few days. Better to have it with you than wish you'd packed it. Throwing my trainers on, grabbing a map from the hotel reception and heading out in a place I've never been to before is a buzz. Going for a run somewhere new has become one of my favourite adventures when I travel.



“Even if I know I won't have time to run, I can guarantee an opportunity will crop up if I don't pack my kit”

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GEORGE F WINTER

Brain health and running

George examines what happens to our brains when we run and compares cognitive function of **MASTER ATHLETES** to sedentary people

The UK population is around 64 million, of which 23.2 million are aged 50 or over; 14.9 million are aged 60 or over; and 1.5 million are 85 or over. With life expectancy having almost doubled over the last two centuries, the population is getting older.

One function of increasing age is an increased susceptibility to conditions such as Alzheimer's disease (AD), which in 2010 affected almost 34 million people worldwide and, in the absence of effective treatment and prevention, the prevalence of AD is expected to triple by 2050. But there is some good news for runners of all ages.

A recent article by Drs Takshi Tarumi and Rong Zhang of the University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center, writing in *Exercise and Sports Science Reviews* highlighted studies which showed that around "30% of AD cases may be related to modifiable risk factors such as physical inactivity and cardiovascular risk factors". The article, entitled "The role of exercise-induced cardiovascular adaptation in brain health", stated that there is compelling evidence to suggest that habitual aerobic exercise – that includes running – helps reduce age-related cognitive decline by helping to preserve brain structure.

In two separate studies, Tarumi and Zhang compared master athletes (MA) with sedentary individuals who were matched for age, sex, educational level, nutrition, sleep and other lifestyle factors, and found that MAs displayed higher cognitive performance in memory and executive function.



Regular exercise helps strengthen your brain as well as your body.

WHAT'S GOING ON IN THE BRAIN DURING AEROBIC EXERCISE?

There are around 100 billion nerve cells – neurons – in the brain. Axons are long slender projections of neurons that conduct electrical impulses. Axons are covered by a sheath of myelin, and with advancing age the myelin becomes increasingly damaged and slows the transmission of electric impulses. Habitual aerobic exercise helps to attenuate this demyelination process, contributing to improvements in cognitive performance

BRAIN VOLUME

Regular aerobic exercise could help increase or preserve volume in regions of the brain affected by age and associated with impaired cognition. For example, one study of MAs and older adults with a sedentary lifestyle found that the brains of MAs had greater volumes in areas connected with motor control and visual/spatial function. And it only needs a relatively short time of moderate-intensity aerobic exercise to increase brain volume. For instance, when older, sedentary adults participated in a six-to-12-month walking programme, their brain volumes in certain areas increased compared with a matched group of older adults who undertook a stretching programme.

BRAIN HEALTH AND CARDIOVASCULAR FUNCTION

Moderate-to-high-intensity exercise can increase cardiac output eight-fold and skeletal muscle blood flow a hundred-fold. Since the brain relies heavily on the blood supply to bring it oxygen and nutrients, "exercise-related improvements in cardiovascular control of cerebral blood flow may play a crucial role in maintaining normal brain function and structure".

BRAIN HEALTH AND EXERCISE INTENSITY

An analysis of studies that examined the relationship between physical activity intensity and the incidence of stroke or mortality found that "moderately active individuals had a 20% lower risk and highly active individuals had a 27% lower risk of stroke incidence or mortality than the low-active individuals." However, it's worth remembering that the authors state: "Emerging evidence suggests that strenuous endurance exercise leads to brain injury when performed without adequate recovery."

Is there an optimal dose of exercise that prevents or slows age-related brain deterioration? Currently, the answer is no, and the authors speculate that if there is such a dose it will depend on the individual and will be determined by age, sex, cardiovascular disease risk and environmental and genetic factors.

It's clear that exercise is not only good for the ageing body, but for the ageing mind too.



With life expectancy having almost doubled... the population is getting older

A keen long-distance runner and freelance writer, **George F Winter** is a Fellow of the Institute of Biomedical Science

Get started with heart-rate training

Heart-rate training has many **BENEFITS FOR ALL RUNNERS** because it teaches you how to pace and listen to your body. Here's our simple guide to get you started

Far from being just for the elites, newer runners have the most to gain from heart-rate training. And it's not as confusing as you might think.

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS?

Using a heart-rate monitor will help teach you how to run at the right pace. It will slow you down and make you more efficient. They are perfect for new runners who often push themselves too hard.

By running in the right zones more often, you will train your energy systems in the correct way, teach your body to burn fat, and conserve precious carbohydrate stores. Most runners don't work on this easy aerobic base level enough.

Most runners also tend to have a narrow "pace window" – often with little difference between training and racing pace. Using a heart-rate monitor will encourage you to slow your easy runs down and speed up on your faster runs.

Monitoring your resting and recovery heart rates can indicate overtraining, illness and fatigue.

Most runners set out to run at a specific pace and glance at their heart-rate data as "interesting information" afterwards. Instead make heart rate your priority, not pace.

Allow your heart rate to guide you, and listen to your body rather than trying to force a pace. Make a note of your pace for information, but don't force it. Your pace will be the outcome of your training, not the other way round.

HOW DO I KNOW WHAT HEART RATE TO RUN AT?

The majority of your training should be in your aerobic zone, at a pace where you can chat comfortably and you're not out of breath.

The point of training at this pace is to build a solid foundation of aerobic fitness. In this zone your body is primarily using fat stores for fuel instead of stores of precious glycogen, and you need to train your body to do this specifically. This is especially important for marathon runners and beginners.

This pace is about 70-75 per cent of your maximum heart rate (I'll explain how to calculate that later on) and you should do

around 80-90 per cent of your running in that zone.

When you first try running at this pace it will feel painfully slow. It can feel quite demoralising, and you might even have to walk up hills. But stick with it. In only a few weeks, your pace for the same heart rate will soon come up and you'll become more efficient and fitter.

At the other end of the scale, it can be a good idea to train your "anaerobic threshold" and do some running at a higher heart rate. This pace is about 85 per cent of your maximum, and if you're not used to it, it can feel quite difficult. Most runners do very little of this sort of training, and generally tend to run in the mid-zone most of the time.

You only need to do about 10 per cent of your weekly mileage at this pace though, and you can mix it up with some longer tempo runs, interval work and hill work, depending on your goal.

Only attempt this sort of training when you have been running for at least six months, you are injury-free, and you are running regularly two to three times a week.



HOW DO I MEASURE MY HEART RATE WHEN RUNNING?

Invest in a good heart-rate monitor, which will track your heart rate as you run. Most monitors have a chest strap and watch, and they have a variety of features measuring 'real time' heart rate, average, maximum, etc. You can buy a basic model for about £40-£50. For a top-of-the-range integrated GPS model, expect to spend up to £400.



HOW DO I MEASURE MY RESTING HEART RATE?

The first thing you need is your resting heart rate. Take your resting heart rate first thing in the morning, before you get out of bed and before you've had coffee. If you have a heart-rate monitor, put it on and lie down. If not, find your pulse at your neck or wrist and count for 60 seconds.

Repeat it two minutes later and take the average. Make a note of the figure. The average resting heart rate is around 65-75 BPM (many runners are as low as 45-50). As your heart becomes more efficient and stronger with increased fitness, your resting heart rate will get lower. Keep track of it over a few months to monitor improvements in your fitness.

An unusual rise in your resting heart rate can indicate illness, overtraining or fatigue, so keep an eye on it and if it's 5-10 beats higher than normal, then take some time off and rest.

HOW DO I WORK OUT MY MAXIMUM HEART RATE?

Unlike your resting heart rate, your maximum heart rate has little to do with fitness, and you can't really influence it with training.

It's hard to measure your maximum heart rate. You have to push yourself to your absolute limit, in either a controlled assessment in a sport physiology lab or out on the road yourself. Neither method is especially realistic, so we tend to use a formula to estimate it instead. The outdated and somewhat crude method of using the calculation of $220 - \text{age}$ has been replaced by the following calculations:

Women $209 - (0.9 \times \text{age})$

Men $214 - (0.8 \times \text{age})$

Both of which tend to give a more accurate, although still fairly general result.

So for a 45-year-old woman, you'd do the following: $209 - (40.5) = 168.5$ **maximum HR**



Running with a heart-rate monitor will help teach you how to run at the right pace

HOW DO I CALCULATE MY ZONES?

Keep things simple and just work with two main training zones:

Easy/aerobic pace (70 per cent)
Harder/anaerobic pace (85 per cent+)

You don't need to make things

complicated and train at lots of different zones. Keep it simple. To work out these zones, you need to calculate your working heart rate: $\text{Maximum HR} - \text{Resting HR} = \text{working HR}$. Then calculate 70 per cent and 85 per cent of your working HR and add your resting HR back on.

Taking our 45-year-old female runner. She has:

Resting HR = 60
Maximum HR = 168.5
 $168.5 - 60 = 108.5$
(Working HR)
 108.5×0.7 **(to calculate 70 per cent zone) = 75.95**
Then add on Resting HR
 $75.95 + 60 = 135.9$

(round it up to 136).

136 BPM is the 70 per cent training zone for our runner in this example.

That is where she should run for around 80-90 per cent of her training.

You can do the same for 85 per cent zone.

HOW SHOULD I USE MY ZONES?

After you've worked out your zones, you can set them up on your heart rate-monitor or set an alert to let you know if you're out of zone. Set up two main zones to run under 70 per cent and over 85 per cent. That's all you need.

Try doing most of your running at under or around 70 per cent for the first four to six weeks. Keep it under 70 per cent (not an average) and if it creeps over that, then walk or slow down. It will feel slow, but it's the vital part of re-training your aerobic base. It might mean you need to find a new (slower) training partner for a while, or run on your own until your pace comes back up. At this stage it's really important to ignore pace (in terms of minute per mile), and just focus on heart rate.

Your pace will soon come back up and you'll find that within four to six weeks, you'll be able to run faster for the same heart rate.

Then after six weeks or so, when you have a solid aerobic base, you can start to add some harder runs at the 85 per cent level. Try five minutes at 85 per cent x 3 to begin with and gradually increase it until you can sustain the pace for 10-15 minutes or more.

WHAT ABOUT RECOVERY HEART RATE?

A great way to see if you're getting fitter is to monitor how quickly your heart rate drops after exercise. As soon as you stop running, measure how long it takes for your heart rate to drop back down to 90 BPM. Over time you should see this improve. If you notice it's not dropping quickly or seems to be more variable, then take some time off and pay more attention to your recovery and sleep.

MY MAXIMUM HEART RATE DOESN'T SEEM RIGHT?

Around 10-20 per cent of runners will find that they have a much higher maximum heart rate than the formula predicts. With these runners, it's important to look for evidence over time when running hard. Have a look at your heart rate when racing or running at your hardest – and make a note of the highest you can get it to. It's unlikely that will be your true maximum, but it will give you a good idea of where it might be. As a rule of thumb you can add on 5 BPM from your hard run to predict your true max.

THE MAFFETONE METHOD

Coach Phil Maffetone has a useful and very easy method of calculating your zones. Instead of worrying about your maximum HR – which we know can be inaccurate – he uses a very simple formula.

THREE OF THE LATEST MONITORS

Garmin Forerunner 235 £269.99



The newest member of the Garmin family, this neat watch does all the usual GPS duties etc but will monitor your heart rate also as well as estimate your maximum V02 (volume of oxygen consumption).

garmin.com

TomTom Runner 2 £189.99

This clever GPS watch monitors heart-rate by your wrist or can connect to an external device. You can also listen to music using Bluetooth.

tomtom.com/en



MYZONE £129.99

This clever chest monitor takes the guesswork away by showing you your effort percentage.



180 – age = 70 per cent training zone

If you're fit and have been training for a year without injury + 5

If you've been ill or had time off training – 5

For our 45-year-old female runner this would be 135 BPM. This correlates nicely with the 70 per cent figure we calculated above to be 136.

That figure should correlate reasonably well to your calculated zone you worked out using maximum and resting heart rates. If you're unsure or there's a big discrepancy, go for a figure in the middle between your own calculation and the Maffetone method figure.

ARE THERE ANY DOWNSIDES?

While heart-rate training can be a fabulous tool to help you train and recovery properly, it's important to keep it in perspective. Remember why you run. Get out there with your running buddies and just enjoy yourself. Don't forget we run for many reasons and don't take it too seriously. Run for fun, fitness and pleasure. Look up from your watch from time to time and enjoy the scenery.



Allow your heart rate to guide you, rather than trying to force a pace

BEST BASE LAYERS

It's officially cold! Keep warm on your training runs with **OUR ROUND-UP** of essential kit



» **GORE WINDSTOPPER TURTLENECK £69.99**

Snug and comfy with front zipper for ventilation, Gore's ladies' turtleneck protects from cooling at neck, front, shoulder, arm and kidney-area.
goreapparel.com



» **LIJA COOL DOWN T-STRAP TOP £66**

Lightweight and snug, with a crew neck, dropped shoulder seam detail, fitted waistband with handy key pocket.
lijastyle.com



» **LIJA TRANQUILITY LEGGINGS £72**

Super-comfortable moisture-wicking leggings with a flat draw chord at the waist and a brushed finish on the inside. Includes a handy key pocket space, too.
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This warm windproof men's thermal fits like a second skin. With few seams and brushed polypropylene fabric, you'll stay dry and warm without over-heating.
goreapparel.com



» **GORE WINDSTOPPER RUNNING BOXERS £29.99**

Ideal for windy, frosty days. The technical Windstopper laminate protects from wind chill while providing maximum breathability. Minimised seams help prevent chaffing.
goreapparel.com



» **ODLO EVOLUTION LONG SLEEVE - KIDS £35**

Keep kids warm with this lightweight, thermal running top. Made partly from recycled materials, it has odour-control fibres. Seamless knitting technology reduces chances of chaffing.

odlo.co.uk



» **TRIBESPORTS MID-ZIP HALF LAYER £52**

Soft and stretchy, this warm thermal running top is ideal as a standalone or base layer. It is reflective in low light and is made from sweat-wicking material.

tribesports.com



» **ODLO MEDALIA RUNNING HOODIE £70**

Handy when running in below zero temperatures, and works well as a base layer with vest on top. Soft hoodie keeps ears/cheeks warm and watch-friendly cuffs mean you don't have to roll up your sleeve.

odlo.co.uk



» **BLACKCOMB EVOLUTION BASE LAYER SHIRT £65**

Delicate yet super warm, and so soft and light, you won't know you're wearing this. It fits like a glove and is also useful for running, walking, cycling and skiing.

odlo.co.uk



» **BLACKCOMB EVOLUTION BASE LAYER LEGGINGS £65**

Super light and warm, these leggings make the perfect base layer under shorts. Also good for cycling, skiing and walking.

odlo.co.uk



» **GORE WINDSTOPPER SINGLET £49.99**

Ideal for windy, cooler days, as a base layer or even as a standalone top, or with arm warmers, this singlet has an extra-long back to keep out cold draughts.

goreapparel.com



DO YOU HAVE A FAVOURITE PIECE OF KIT?

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LIVING WITH...

TRIGGER POINT THERAPY QUADBALLER

Every month, we share our experience of **RUNNING TECH** and accessories and what it's like to train with them over time



Reviewed by Sarah
Russell, *Consultant
Editor*

£49.95

*live-on-the-edge.com or
physicalcompany.com*

INJURY PREVENTION

I'm a huge fan of foam rolling and self-myofascial release. Done regularly and correctly it can help reduce injuries and allow you to move more freely when running. Using a tool such as the Quadballer – alongside conditioning exercises and massage – can help you manage your niggles and stay injury free. I've used all the TP Therapy products for many years, yet the Quadballer is my favourite tool of the whole collection.

WHAT'S IT LIKE?

The TP Quadballer is basically a much firmer foam roller, specifically designed for your quads and calves. Shaped like a rolling pin with wheels, it offers a more intense foam rolling experience than a normal roller, and the convex shape of the rolling area means you can really hit the muscles more specifically. The 'rolling area' is made from a hard core with a soft cover and flexible fabric, which gently grips the skin surface and provides you with really deep tissue relief.

WHY USE IT?

If you've been rolling for a while and have adapted, or you don't



In three words:
Firm
Specific
Effective

feel much when you roll (hard to believe but some people don't!), then try the Quadballer. It is so much more specific (painful!) and you can really target the hot spots and knots. It's also great if you find it hard to lift your body weight on your arms to foam roll your calves. Using the Quadballer means you can get enough pressure into your calves without having to lift up too high. You can roll one calf at a time and get right into the soleus muscle and hit those niggly little hot spots. You

can really hit the adductors with it too as you're lower to the ground when rolling.

WHAT ELSE?

It's perfect for travel as it takes up much less space than a traditional roller. A word of warning though. When I say 'intense' I mean 'intense'.. be prepared to endure some discomfort! (Yes it hurts more than normal foam rolling.) However.. the benefits are huge and it really does make a difference. Aim to

'graduate' to the Quadballer from a traditional roller.

BEST INSTRUCTION

You'll also need to rethink the way you 'roll'. Following the specific TP Therapy programming is really important to get the best out of it. There are some special cross friction, knee bends and movement techniques to try out rather than just 'rolling'. Check out TP Therapy Tuesday Videos on YouTube and search for 'Quadballer'.



FINAL VERDICT For those who feel they would like to get more out of their current foam roller, this product is ideal – it really works on those niggly bits and gets to the hot spots quickly and easily. Although, of course, it's still painful!

6 Essential long-run recovery poses

Stretching and flexing can help aid your recovery after those long runs. Yoga teacher **HELEN CLARE** shows us six great poses to try out



1 DOWNWARD FACING DOG

GREAT FOR: Re-lengthening and decompressing the spine, releasing tension in hamstrings and calves.

This is such a great pose to do after any activity and is always the first pose I do after a run to begin re-lengthening my muscles and spine. Long distance running accumulates so much compression in the spinal discs, so is it a big cause of lower back pain in runners.

HOW TO: Start on your hands and knees, push into your hands to lift the knees and guide your hips up and back, lengthening your spine. Only then start to think about lowering your heels towards the ground. If your hamstrings are tight then this pose will be hard at first, so primarily think about lengthening the back and arms by keeping a bend in the knees. Hold for five breaths.



2 LOW LUNGE

GREAT FOR: Releasing tension in the hip flexors – a major area of tension in runners – created by the continual contraction of the hip flexors each time you lift your knee.

HOW TO: From Down Dog, step one foot forward, bringing the ankle under the knee. Place your hands on your front thigh and lower your tail bone toward the ground as you sink your hips until you feel a deep but comfortable stretch in the front of your hip. Hands can also be on the floor or resting on blocks either side of you. Your front knee should be above your ankle, or you can take it slightly past the ankle to increase the stretch in the calf and Achilles. Use a blanket under your back knee for added comfort. Take five deep slow breaths, focusing on the hip flexors in the front of the hip of the back leg, exhaling out the tension.



3 PIGEON

GREAT FOR: Hips! This is an intense stretch for the gluteals and the deeper piriformis. All the hip muscles get tight from running, which if left, can lead to back pain and knee problems. This pose gets deep and releases tension in the piriformis muscle.

DO: Move into this pose extra slowly, especially if you have any knee issues, due to the hip flexion and body weight over the knee.

HOW TO: Begin in Down Dog or on hands and knees, then bring your right foot towards your left hand. Bring your shin to the ground with your right foot by your left hip. Check your back leg is out straight behind you and your hips are level, no matter how high they are! With tight hips you won't get them both to the ground – support yourself with a blanket roll or cushion under the right hip. Start upright then extend your torso forward. Take five to 15 breaths, enjoy a deep stretch but come up if too intense. Repeat on the other side.

4 PYRAMID

GREAT FOR: Releasing tight hamstrings. Your hamstrings obviously contract each time you take your foot back, so carefully stretching them out post-run helps to release this built

up tension, hugely reducing the risk of muscle tears. **HOW TO:** From the Low Lunge, step the back foot forward, place your hands on your hips and come up half way. Extend your spine by looking forwards and level your hips. Remain here, or take your hands to the floor or rest them on blocks, keep the spine long for another breath before exhaling and folding over your front leg to your own degree. Find the stretch in the belly of the hamstrings, keeping a bend in the front knee as required. For an additional shoulder stretch, interlace your fingers behind your back. Hold for five breaths, replace your hands back on your hips and inhale up with a long spine, naval drawing in.



“Long distance running accumulates so much compression in the spinal discs, so it is a big cause of lower back pain for runners”



6 RELAX

WHY? Aside from releasing tension through mindful stretching and strengthening, increasing lung capacity and developing focus, yoga allows your body to relax and replenish. Conscious relaxation is easier when muscles have been stretched out, so take the time to do this pose for five minutes at the end. Mentally scan through your whole body and encourage each area to relax. Give yourself this time to rejuvenate and you will recover in between training and competition quicker.

RF



5 BRIDGE

GREAT FOR: Opening the chest, drawing back the shoulders; stretching the psoas. Many runners start to feel their shoulders hunching forwards, due to the forward motion; use this pose to create awareness of drawing the shoulders back. This will improve your posture and running form.

HOW TO: Lie on your back, bend your knees so your ankles are under your knees, feet parallel. Press your hands and feet down as you lift your hips up, keeping your head and neck on the ground. There are various arm positions for this – a nice addition is interlacing the fingers to gain extra lift. Keep the chest lifting the shoulder blades moving in toward each other. Take five breaths, one to three repetitions. Come down slowly and hug your knees in towards your chest.

WANT TO DO MORE?

WHERE: Lime House Yoga Retreat in Cornwall.

WHEN: 22-25 April 2016

WHAT: Helen has teamed up with a chi running coach to develop her Chi Running & Yoga Weekend Retreat, taking place in the spring. To find out more about this and other retreats that she offers, visit helenclareyoga.com.

Helen Clare is an experienced yoga teacher based in Cornwall. She teaches classes in Cornwall and leads yoga retreats combined with sports around the world. A keen runner and surfer, Helen is dedicated to spreading the health benefits of yoga and works closely with many athletes as part of their cross-training, injury prevention and therapy.



SWEAT

THE SMALL STUFF

Aerobic exercise such as running often involves sweating, but why do we **LOSE SODIUM** when we sweat? And what is the best method of rehydration?

George Winter asks the experts

THE SCIENCE

Electrolytes are an important part of the sweating story. They're substances which, when dissolved, separate into atoms that carry either a positive or negative electrical charge, and they're vital for cellular function.

Two types of electrolytes, sodium and potassium, are involved in the control of fluid volume. Body fluid is either inside cells, as intracellular fluid (ICF), or outside cells, as extracellular fluid (ECF), which includes blood plasma. The amount of sodium in the body determines the ECF volume, whereas potassium determines the ICF volume.

Water crosses the membranes separating ICF from ECF, and its movement is influenced by the number of ions in each compartment – the osmolality. The less water in the blood, the greater the concentration of electrolytes and the greater the osmolality. When osmolality rises, the body produces anti-diuretic hormone (ADH), conserving more water inside the body, and making blood and urine more concentrated; when osmolality falls, less ADH is produced and blood and urine are more dilute.

So what does all this mean for runners?

THE ROLE OF SODIUM

Humans sweat more than any other animal – rates can exceed 500g/m² per

hour – losing water and electrolytes, particularly sodium, in varying amounts. The concentration of sodium in sweat is always less than its concentration in the ECF, so sweating without drinking causes the concentration of sodium in the ECF to rise, triggering the thirst mechanism.

But why do we lose sodium in sweat? Exercise physiologist Professor Tim Noakes suggests in *Waterlogged: The Serious Problem of Overhydration in Endurance Sports* (2012) that salt loss in sweat occurs “as a mechanism for delaying drinking and so it acutely dissociates the extent of the water loss from the thirst that it produces.”

Generally speaking, we eat around 8.5g of salt a day. So how can we explain the phenomenon of exercise-associated hyponatraemia (EAH), which can occur during prolonged exercise, and the main abnormality of which is a reduced blood sodium concentration? In 2006 an article in *The British Journal of Sports Medicine* (2006, 40: 98–105) claimed: “Contributing factors to exercise-associated hyponatraemia include overdrinking of hypotonic fluids and excessive loss of total body sodium [my emphasis]”. Significantly, the study authors had associations with the sports drink industry. But Prof Tim Noakes in *Waterlogged* disputed the reference to total body sodium, responding: “There is no scientific

SWEATING AND THIRST

by Dr Jonathan Williams, Honorary Lecturer in Sport and Exercise Medicine at Queen Mary London University, Member of the Faculty of Sports and Exercise Medicine, and team doctor to Bristol Rugby and Bristol City FC.

During exercise, the metabolic rate increases to power movement, but heat production increases. To regulate its core temperature, the body has to lose heat into the environment. The most effective means of losing heat is evaporation. Water vaporisation from the respiratory passages and sweat on the skin transfer heat to the environment. During intense activity, the body sweats more in order to lose more heat by evaporation. Losing fluid through sweat stimulates thirst and therefore drinking, a mechanism which served our hunter-gatherer ancestors for hundreds of thousands of years before the invention of ‘sports drinks’! Ignoring one’s thirst and not drinking during intense exercise may ultimately cause clinically significant dehydration and malaise, but conversely, drinking to excess may lead to potentially fatal EAH (low sodium levels in the blood due to fluid overload).



basis for this statement". These differing views are a good example of the scientific conflict that exists between those who promote electrolyte-supplemented sports drinks, and those who don't.

The low blood sodium concentration in EAH is caused by drinking too much fluid, including sodium-containing sports drinks. This was made clear in February 2015, when the Third International Exercise-Associated Hyponatraemia Consensus Development Conference stated in the *Clinical Journal of Sports Medicine* (2015; 25: 303–320) that "... in most clinical scenarios, the driving force for the development of hyponatraemia is a relative excess of total body water."

Taking on extra sodium before or during exercise will not prevent EAH developing in those who drink in excess of the dictates of thirst.

SODIUM-FORTIFIED DRINKS AND GELS

For those of us who are used to a high-carbohydrate diet, the evidence is clear: consuming carbohydrate during endurance exercise improves performance. It's generally accepted that taking around 60g of carbohydrate per hour is the best strategy in events that last for more than two hours, and there's evidence that specific mixtures of glucose/maltodextrin and fructose can actually boost carbohydrate uptake.

Sports drinks allow two goals to be achieved: first, hydration; second, the delivery of carbohydrate. So for the athlete who's thirsty and short of carbohydrate, the typical sports drink meets these needs. Sports gels allow the delivery of carbohydrate in a more concentrated form, albeit at the expense of volume, something to remember when hydration strategies are being devised.

Many sports drink and sports gel manufacturers claim that their products supply much-needed electrolytes, the most prominently publicised of which is sodium. But how crucial is sodium replenishment to the endurance athlete, in fact, and is it even needed, given our prodigious salt intakes?

EXERCISE-ASSOCIATED MUSCLE CRAMPS (EAMC)

When Dr Michael F Bergeron's paper entitled "Muscle Cramps during Exercise – Is it Fatigue or Electrolyte Deficit?" appeared in *Current Sports Medicine Reports* (2008; 7 (4): S50–S55) he suggested two possible causes of EAMC. The first was as a result of skeletal muscle overload and which the so-called neuromuscular control theory suggests is caused when different factors such as

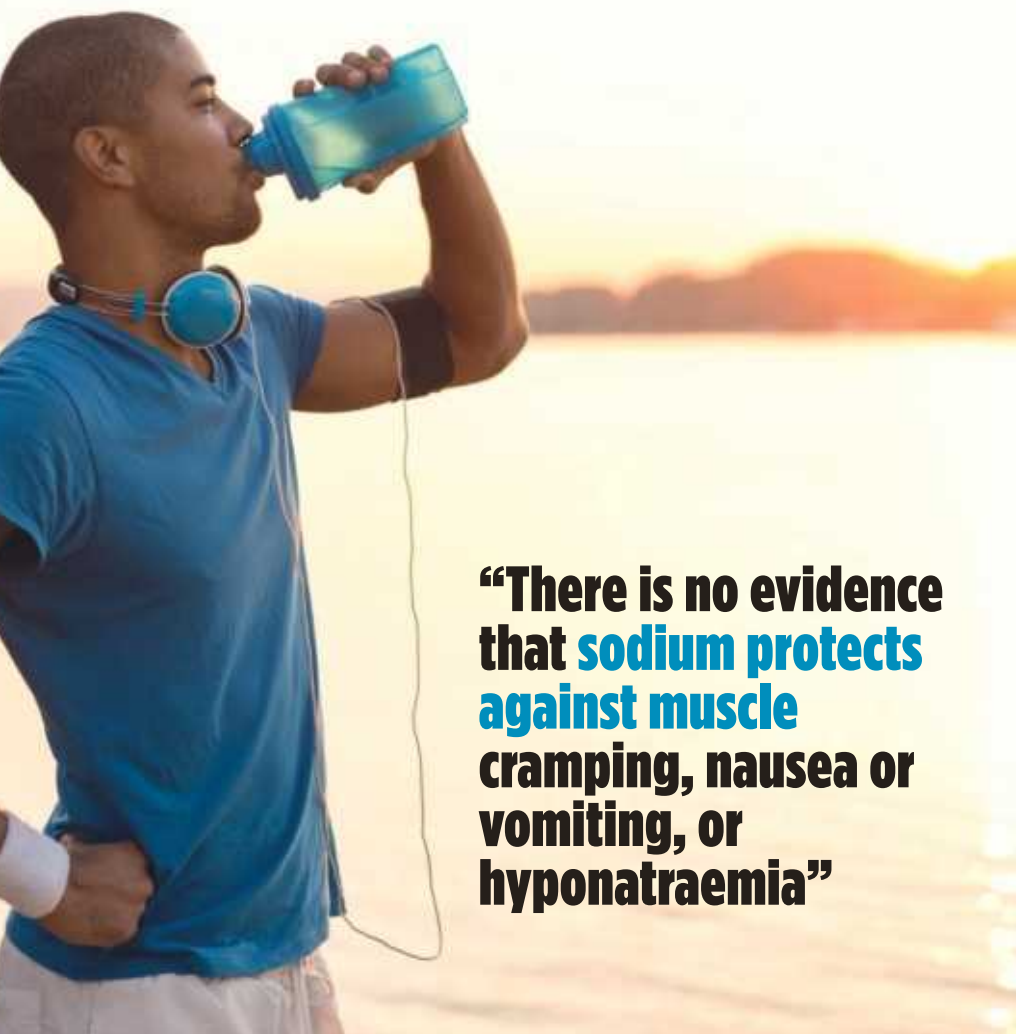
fatigue and muscle damage combine to increase nerve excitability, triggering the condition.

The second possible cause was "extensive sweating and a consequent significant whole-body exchangeable sodium deficit caused by insufficient sodium dietary intake ...". This was endorsed by Dr E Randy Eichner, in *Current Sports Medicine Reports* (2014; 13: 197–198), who even stated that "[c]ontrarians favour fancy theories like 'altered neuromuscular control'".

But the 'fancy theory' ridiculed by Eichner received support in a recent paper (*Current Sports Medicine Reports* 2015; 14: 353–354) which noted that in August 2014 two healthy high school American football players died from EAH encephalopathy after drinking large volumes of fluid to prevent EAMC: "Underlying these tragedies is the belief held by many medical professionals and the general public that EAMC is caused by dehydration and electrolyte (eg sodium) losses. Yet, new experimental and observational data ... suggest that cramping may be due to changes in the nervous system."

Drinking in response to thirst is a safe way of hydrating.

The salt in your diet ought to be sufficient without supplemented drinks.



“There is no evidence that sodium protects against muscle cramping, nausea or vomiting, or hyponatraemia”

And a recent study of 280 competitors in a 161km ultramarathon concluded that exercise-associated muscle cramping (EAMC) was most common for those with a history of cramping and greater muscle damage during an ultramarathon. Writing in *Sports Medicine – Open* (2015), the authors stated: “Impaired fluid and sodium balance did not appear to be an etiology of muscle cramping during an ultramarathon.”

One of the report’s co-authors – Professor Martin D Hoffman – told *Running Fitness*, “Basically, we’ve found that whether considering supplemental sodium intake or total sodium intake, there is no evidence that sodium protects against muscle cramping, nausea or vomiting, or

hyponatraemia in this population of ultramarathon runners during continuous exercise up to 30 hours in hot environments. Hydration status can also be maintained without sodium supplements, and by drinking to thirst. Obviously, there is a need for caloric intake during such long bouts of exercise.”

Prof Hoffman’s advice is: “As for exercise less than 60 minutes, presuming adequate hydration and nutrition status at the initiation of exercise, there’s no need for any fluid, electrolyte or caloric intake.”

And Prof Noakes states in relation to sodium intake: “Whether the ingested solution contains a great deal of sodium or none at all; by the time the solution

“It is critical to emphasise that sodium-containing sports drinks, which are hypotonic, will not prevent EAH in athletes who overdrink during exercise, as all sports drinks have a significantly lower sodium concentration (10 to 38 mmol per litre) than serum (approximately 140 mmol per litre).”

“The dilutional effect of volume excess overwhelms any positive effect of sodium and electrolytes in sports drinks.”

“... while modest salt replacement is likely not harmful ... during competitive field events it will be of modest to no benefit in situations where excess fluids are being consumed.”

“The potential detrimental effects of excessive sodium supplementation are not clear.”

passes the site of the small intestine where the bile duct enters, all ingested solutions, whether pure water or an electrolyte-containing sports drink will have identical sodium concentrations.”

SODIUM IN THE DIET

The prestigious Harvard TH Chan School of Public Health says that American consumers eat far too much sodium and far too little potassium, an eating pattern that puts them at higher risk of heart disease and death. The same can be applied to us in Europe. The School states: “Making a few changes in food choices can help shift the balance. Potassium levels are naturally high in vegetables and fruits, and sodium levels are naturally low. Large amounts of sodium are often added to foods during processing. So choosing produce that is fresh or frozen, or choosing foods that have not had salt added during processing, can help curb dietary sodium and boost potassium.” (hsph.harvard.edu/nutritionsource/sodium-potassium-balance/ accessed 8 October 2015).

Sodium is crucial to our regulation of fluid intake, and the evidence is clear that sports drinks and gels are great at delivering carbohydrate and water. But there is no need to consume extra sodium during exercise. Nor is there any need to consume more sodium than that provided by our diets.



SODIUM AND POTASSIUM AMOUNTS (MG) IN FRESH AND PROCESSED FOODS

	Sodium	Potassium
½ red grapefruit	0	166
1 orange	1	232
1 cup blackberries	1	233
2 slices white bread	256	50
2 slices cooked bacon	384	93
2 slices pepperoni pizza	1365	372



JUST DO IT

Staying MOTIVATED isn't easy – life gets busy, the weather sets in, work pressures build, health issues prevail. Three runners with hidden challenges share their life strategies and show us how they stay on track

WORDS Evie Serventi





“TO CELEBRATE MY FIRST YEAR AS A DIABETIC I RAN THE YORKSHIRE THREE PEAKS (27.5 MILES). THAT WAS A PRETTY BIG DAY.”

Adam Gorrell, 31, York, runner and skier, took running to new heights after being diagnosed with Type 1 Diabetes

“When I was diagnosed with Type 1 Diabetes, the doctors and specialists told me to stop any exercise so they could get a grasp on what my body and blood glucose were doing. This seemed completely backwards to me because, surely, exercise was the best way to burn the body’s sugar and regulate the glucose in the system? Running was the easiest

and most accessible and manageable form of exercise during that time so I started running in the hills around my house,” says Adam.

Running dictates Adam’s lifestyle both physically and mentally, and it helps him live a flexible life. “It allows me to efficiently manage my blood sugar; it gives my mind time to relax and unwind; it is a release for me during busy times, and I find it the best way to explore new places when I am away on holiday or on business. Also, I can be quite flexible and enjoy foods that might

otherwise be off limits, as I know I can and will burn through any excess or additional sugar.”

Having poorly managed glucose levels as a diabetic can cause a multitude of complications including hyperglycaemia (when the blood glucose levels are too high). “It can be extremely uncomfortable and cause cramps throughout your body as well as make you short tempered and on edge, which can be a pretty dark place for myself and those around me in those moments,” he says.

“When you don’t want to get out and go for a run, or when your mind is saying ‘you can go tomorrow; I’m tired; let’s not bother today’, that’s when you get up and go for a run. There were times during my Ironman training when the last thing in the world I wanted to do was go for a run, especially after having been on the bike for six hours. Then I realised I could see it as a chore or a choice... and when you’re making a choice to do something it becomes a habit and eventually a passion – and then it’s easy,” says Adam.

“IF YOU DON’T USE IT, YOU LOSE IT”

Janine Felton, 45, Telford, took up running after being diagnosed with osteoarthritis

Janine’s motto has served her well. Just six months after being diagnosed with osteoarthritis, Janine was doing regular strength and conditioning sessions at her local gym, building up her general fitness and strengthening muscles. Her aim was to lose weight and get fit.

Within 18 months, she has almost turned her life around, with running as the driving force. Ironically, Janine was healthier living with osteoarthritis, than before her diagnosis.

“I never take things lying down,” she says. “My goal was to enjoy my daily living without pain... and as I got fitter and made some lifestyle changes (like diet, sleep, balancing life better) the pain eased, my confidence grew, and one day I just fancied going out for a run.”

Janine eventually joined her local running



club, and hasn’t looked back. She enjoys the camaraderie with the other runners, sharing the joy of running, and importantly, sharing a renewed sense of confidence and energy. She is also self-confessed parkrun addict. “I just love that I’m now able to run and manage my arthritis, which is in fact much better for my running. I love parkrun because it’s friendly, local and I can see how I progress as I set myself challenges each week.”

“Okay, so mornings can still be quite tough, as I’m stiff and sometimes in pain. But as the day progresses it often disappears completely, and that’s why running is so great – the more I move, the better I feel in every sense.

“With running, I rely only on myself, no one else, and as I put in the effort, I reap rewards – by feeling healthy, my knees don’t hurt, and I get such a confidence boost,” says Janine.

“You won’t grow if you don’t push yourself, no matter what challenges you face. If you stretch yourself, you prove you can do it and that boosts your self-confidence no end.”



“I love that feeling of achieving... It’s a massive high”



**“YOU DON’T KNOW
UNTIL YOU TRY
... AND THE FEELING
OF TRIUMPHING OVER
ADVERSITY IS ADDICTIVE”**

Tim Clements, 45, East Sussex, an adventure-mad, all-sports athlete with chronic asthma

Diagnosed with chronic asthma at a young age meant that being active and sporty at school wasn’t an option for Tim.

“I remember going to a children’s camp in Norfolk and feeling so unwell, which meant I was excluded from all activities,” recalls Tim. “I felt the condition was

misunderstood and exclusion seemed the obvious solution.” As a result, Tim was slightly overweight as a child, and he missed out on doing lots of activities. But Tim’s parents encouraged him to cycle and taught him to sail, neither of which affected his asthma. That was the beginning of an active life, and Tim hasn’t looked back. Today he regularly takes on what he sees as personal challenges.

“I get a buzz from being able to compete – occasionally at the sharp end in sports such as triathlon from which I would historically have been excluded. I have massive respect for others who take on challenges, and overcome physical or mental issues to compete. I love the feeling of achieving something I thought I would never be able to. It’s a massive high.”

Tim’s fitness levels and weight greatly impact his condition, in that the fitter and leaner he is, the more manageable his asthma. If he indulges too much, he suffers. “There are times when my asthma flares up and any cough or cold type bugs tend to upset the management of it. It’s incredibly frustrating and irritating going from a period of it being well-managed and able to achieve goals, to being affected and potentially incapacitated – especially when I’m focused on a specific event.”

Tim’s strategy is to focus on a number of events with the aim of carrying his fitness from one event to the next, rather than to focus on single events.

MOTIVATION TOOLKIT

» Keep comparisons in perspective

There are always people worse-off or facing bigger challenges. Remember, ultimately it’s your choice. **TIM**

» If you want to train for an event, talk about it

Tell everyone around you and anyone willing to listen, that way you are committing to the event. **ADAM**

» Never compare your achievements to anyone else’s.

JANINE

» If you run with a buddy, make sure you tell the other if you cancel a scheduled run And if they cancel, go anyway – you’ll feel proud of yourself and keep your training consistent. **ADAM**

» Run to your ability (no one else’s) And enjoy it. **JANINE**

» There is no such thing as bad weather

All weather is good for running in, you just have to make sure you’ve got the right equipment. Kit doesn’t have to be expensive or fancy, just warm and dry enough for the conditions. Bad weather days offer better training and you’ll soon find an inner strength when you’re out there in the elements. **ADAM**

» Just keep plugging away Sometimes having a bad run or just participating in an event (without racing) is better than not giving it a go. **TIM**

CREDITS: WITH THANKS TO ARTHRITISRESEARCH.ORG AND DIABETES.ORG.UK



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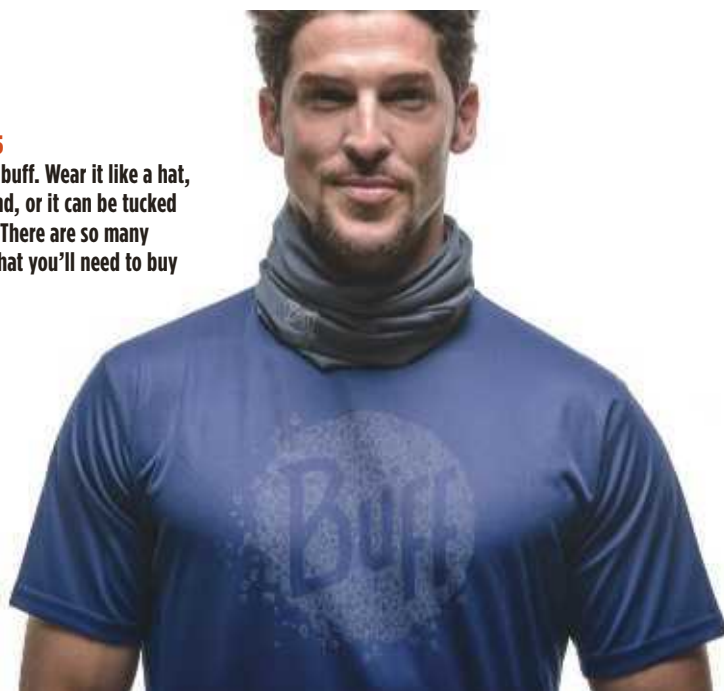


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Perfect for winter trail running, the blend of merino wool and lycra makes for breathable comfort and fewer blisters. They have padding where you need it and ventilation to keep your feet comfortable.
bridgedale.com

» **ORIGINAL BUFF £15**

Every runner needs a buff. Wear it like a hat, neck scarf or headband, or it can be tucked away in your pocket. There are so many options and colours that you'll need to buy more than one.
buffwear.co.uk



» **GORE AIR LADY WINDSTOPPER HEADBAND £29.99**

Ideal for those days when a hat is too hot, but there's still a nip in the air. Made with the Gore Windstopper technology, it will protect you from the wind while remaining wicking and breathable. We love the pink colour and feminine ruching.
goreapparel.co.uk



» **QUEST IMMUNE BIOTIX A month's supply of ImmuneBiotix is £19.75**

Immune Biotix is a supplement designed to support your immune system, containing beta glucans, aged garlic extract, lactobacilli bacteria, vitamin D, selenium, zinc and copper.
questexcellence.com

» **RONHILL MERINO 200 GLOVES £20**

We are in love with anything made from merino wool for winter running, and these gloves are no exception. Lightweight, soft, warm and quick drying. Perfect for keeping your hands warm.
ronhill.com



» **X-BIONIC HIGH HEADBAND £24.99**

Keep your ears warm without overheating thanks to the unique 3D knit structure. Targeted 3D-honeycomb structure protects ears without muffling your hearing
x-bionic.co.uk

» **ODLO MOVE HAT LIGHT £25**

A lightweight running hat with excellent moisture management and breathability. Soft and brushed inside with excellent thermal insulation, this will keep you warm and dry throughout the winter months. It is available in five colours.
odlo.com





» ODLO GLISS RUNNING TIGHTS WARM £60

These full-length tights are made from Lycra combined with a warm and cosy brushed inside for a really comforting feel on hard-working legs. We love the purple and black colourway.
odlo.com



» GORE X-RUNNING 2.0 SHORTS £59.99

If you can't bear to wear tights even in the depths of winter, these shorts are for you. They combine a loose short with a fitted supportive inner tight; to keep your quads and hamstrings protected.
goreapparel.co.uk



» NEW BALANCE BEACON LADIES PULLOVER £75

The Beacon pullover is made with a glow-in-the-dark knit fabric that keeps you visible and warm when running at night. We love the high collar and ruching on the hips.
newbalance.co.uk



» HYDRO FLASK £24.99

This robust and versatile stainless steel flask keeps your hot drink steaming for 6 hours – perfect for your post-run hot chocolate! Fab range of colours, leak-proof cap, robust and lightweight.
hydroflask.com



» RONHILL TRAIL VERTEX JACKET £120

An interesting 'hybrid' jacket combining thermal insulation with water and wind resistance. Panels of Primaloft insulation ensure this jacket will keep you warm on the coldest days.
ronhill.com



» GORE X-RUN ULTRA WINDSTOPPER SOFT SHELL TIGHTS £89.99

These men's three-quarter tights are the ultimate in protection for winter running. Great for winter trail racing.
goreapparel.co.uk



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True intrinsic preparation is something many of us, including **running trainers and coaches, are still unaware of**

INTRINSIC BIOMECHANICS

made easy

Whatever your running goal, don't head out the door until you have focused on the **INTRINSIC** preparation of your **BIOMECHANICS**. Fitness expert Rachel France explains what this is and how it can help you as a runner

For many people, myself included, running is a simple and cost-effective way of becoming fit and staying active. However, running is also commonly linked to overuse injuries and simple low-grade aches and niggles. About 80 per cent of runners are believed to suffer from some form of injury at some point every year. So what's going wrong? And what are we missing?

Maybe you're a beginner, just starting out and you decide to put on your trainers and go for a jog around the park. It's the easiest way to get started, isn't it? At least you're moving, right?

Maybe your goal is to run a marathon. You'd be right in thinking you need to build up to that with hours of training, introduce some diet changes, as well as some strength work and understand hydration.

But there's something missing. Before you build up the miles, head out for a run or start training for a marathon, you need to focus on something called intrinsic preparation of your biomechanics.

Intrinsic biomechanics isn't really a new concept but it is something we should be aware of.

WHAT IS IT?

Biomechanics = the study of human movement.

Extrinsic biomechanics = analysis of the performance of movements.

Intrinsic biomechanics = analysis of what

is happening inside the body to create those movements (neuro-musculoskeletal system).

The preparation for movement is key to the prevention of injuries, which is why we warm-up. And yet true intrinsic preparation is something that many of us, including running trainers and coaches, are still unaware of.

Generally we warm-up by doing some gentle dynamic stretching followed by a light jog. This is fine and at least we're doing something, but it's probably not enough.

If you've been sitting at your desk all day, you need more than a few leg swings and lunges to prepare you for a run. This is important for everyone whether you're an Olympic-distance runner or someone who is new to the sport.

WHAT HAPPENS TO YOUR BODY WHEN IT IS SEDENTARY?

Studies tell us that of those 80 per cent of runners who get injured each year, most are thought to be due to the repetitive nature of the sport. This is probably partly true. But I believe our poor lifestyle habits, such as sitting at desks, driving a lot and looking at television and computer screens, which are actually causing many of our problems. During these hours of inactivity, the body adapts its muscles. The human body has an amazing ability to adapt to its environment.

These "over-active" muscles are then

held in a state of contraction (muscle spasm) – just holding us "in position". This continuous muscle contraction can also directly influence the nerves and can potentially create a tethering, where they bind down to other soft tissue structures around them.

This in turn can make your joints stiff through the shortened muscle-length, and the tethering of the nerves across the joints.

So even if you think you feel fine, as you put on your trainers and prepare for your run, intrinsically, you're not at all prepared for movement, let alone running.

SO HOW DO YOU PREPARE?

If you're preparing for your first run, a big race or if you simply want to be injury-free for longer, there are ways to get prepared and reduce your risk of injuries. Becoming more aware of your "intrinsic biomechanics" is the first step.

As far as runners are concerned, the pelvis is the epicentre of the body. A pelvis that moves freely will improve performance and help reduce the risk of injury. A pelvis that doesn't move properly can cause problems in the knees, ankles and feet. Your knee or foot pain may in fact be linked to a problem with your pelvis.

Would you believe it is actually really simple to screen your own pelvic function before a run? This can reveal where any problems might be and what you can do about them.





The 4 sign screening test will help detect problems with the pelvis



Rather than stretching the muscles, the 4 sign exercise suggests contracting it to release tension

BE PREPARED

4 SIGN SCREEN

This screening test is important for runners. Running requires freedom of movement around the pelvic area to reduce the risk of injury and improve performance.

- 1 Lie flat on the floor with your legs out straight.
- 2 Cross your ankle over and above the opposite knee. Then allow your knee to relax down as far as it will go towards the floor, while keeping both hip bones a level height to each other.
- 3 Check how far from the floor your knee is. You could get a friend to measure it with a tape measure or take photo with your phone so you can compare more accurately.
- 4 Then swap to compare to the leg on the other side.

Look for any difference from left to right. Is one knee higher than the other? Does one side feel tighter or more restricted?

If one side is different to the other, both knees are far from the floor, or if you have difficulty getting into the position due to stiffness, this suggests you have a dysfunctional pelvis.

It's likely that your pelvic muscles are in spasm and do not have their full capacity of movement. They are being held in a constant contraction and maybe tethering the nerves, slowing you down or even reducing your stride length.

You may be unaware of any problems until you do this screen. Or you may have been aware of niggles or lack of mobility but been unsure about how to fix it.

HOW DO YOU FIX IT?

To allow better freedom of movement it has been suggested by researchers that rather than stretching the muscle, we should instead apply a muscle energy technique to the limiting muscles. This means doing the opposite of stretching and actually contracting the muscle, and by only 20 per cent. Think about it. If the muscle is in some sort of spasm, stretching it could make it worse. It needs to be "released".

If you're feeling confused, try it and see what happens.

4 SIGN EXERCISE

- 1 Lie or sit, with your knees bent and your feet flat on the floor.
- 2 Cross your ankle over your knee and place your hand firmly on to the inside of the top knee.
- 3 Rotate the top leg upwards into your hand (while at the same time pressing down with your hand). Exert only about 20

Before donning your trainers, assess your body for problems that may be caused by an inactive lifestyle



per cent effort. This is important as it must be a subtle contraction to be effective.

4 Hold this contraction for 20 seconds – you should feel your hip muscles gently contract. Then repeat the same process four times in a row.

This technique has been shown to reduce what is known as sub-clinical muscle spasm.

Try doing four repetitions on either side before running and see if you can notice the difference in your pelvis function. Hopefully you will feel more fluid and mobile.

Ideally perform the “4 sign exercise” periodically throughout the day if you continue to sit at your desk.

You could also re-assess by performing the pelvic test again after your set of four on both sides.

HOW DOES THIS BENEFIT YOU?

The value of this exercise is to give your pelvis its capacity to move as freely as possible, and to reduce the effects of a sedentary lifestyle.

Better movement in your pelvis will mean you'll be able to run faster, with longer strides and with less risk of an injury.

This is just one screen and exercise of many to correct our intrinsic biomechanics system, compromised by years of 21st century living. It's so simple, yet so effective. Try it for yourself and let us know on Twitter @runfitmag.



Rachel's background: Rachel's professional career in the fitness industry spans two decades from when she started as a professional dancer travelling overseas across Europe and the far east.

Her professional qualifications range from sports massage, fitness professional, qualified teacher, assessor and IV, but group exercise is still her biggest passion. She was an integral part of the development of the full Specialist Biomechanics Coach™ Diploma and is programme director of the iMoveFreely® Instructor programme.

Rachel is now managing director of Biomechanics Education Ltd the leading training provider for Intrinsic Biomechanics courses, and continues to lecture, present and teach internationally about the benefits of Biomechanics Coaching™ and the iMoveFreely® programme.

Contact Rachel on: rachel@biomechanicseducation.com
Find out more at: biomechanicseducation.com





RECIPE OF THE MONTH

Creamy Avocado, Bacon & Basil Spaghetti



PREP TIME **COOK TIME**

Ingredients for 4

400g spaghetti, wholemeal if possible
4 slices of bacon
2 ripe avocados
1 large clove of garlic, peeled and crushed
A large pinch of salt
Plenty of freshly ground black pepper
A squeeze of lemon or

lime juice
25g feta cheese, sliced thinly or crumbled
25g pack of basil leaves, roughly torn
1 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
200g pack of Cherry tomatoes, halved
1 dried chilli, crumbled

Why is it good for you? Avocados are heavy on calories, but these calories are rammed with energy-fuelled nutrients. They are a rich source of healthy unsaturated fat, and contain more potassium than bananas, so are a great way to recover after a long run: simply spread on fresh bread and add salt and lime juice. In this slow-release pasta dish, avocados add a delicious creaminess and will help strengthen the immune system to protect you through your chilly winter runs.

METHOD

1 Cook the spaghetti in a large pan of salted boiling water, according to the instructions on the pack.
2 While the spaghetti is cooking, grill the bacon. When it is crispy, transfer it to a plate, allow it to cool and break it into pieces.
3 Cut the avocados in half and remove the stones. Scoop out the flesh and transfer to a plate. Mash with a fork, then add the garlic, salt and pepper, a squeeze of lemon or lime juice, the basil leaves and most of the feta (reserve a little of the basil and feta to garnish).

4 Drain the spaghetti when it is cooked, saving about 2 tbsps of the cooking water. Return it to the saucepan with the reserved cooking water, and then stir in the avocado mixture, crispy bacon, baby tomatoes and a drizzle of extra virgin olive oil. Mix until combined.
5 Serve on four warmed plates, and garnish with the reserved basil and feta, and a few sprinkles of dried chilli.



Nutrition Energy (kcal) 661 Protein (g) 22 Carbohydrate (g) 66 Fat (g) 35 Of which sugars (g) 1 Of which saturates (g) 8.5 Salt (g) 1.5 Fibre (g) 7.5



FOR MORE RECIPES,
VISIT
GOFASTERFOOD.COM



Kate Percy Athlete and cook, Kate is passionate about the link between good eating and better performance. Her bestselling books, *Go Faster Food* (£12.99), *Go Faster Food for Kids*, (£16.99), and *FuelSmart for Race Day* (£3.99) bring top sports nutrition advice to life with delicious recipes to help athletes fulfil their potential. They're available at amazon.co.uk, in bookstores, or get a signed copy from her website at gofasterfood.com

RACENEWFOREST EVENT SCHEDULE 2016

May 1st

Forca Lymington (Open Water Baths) Triathlon

Sea Water Baths, Lymington, SO41 3SE
500m Swim (Lido) / 20 km cycle / 5 km run

May 15th

SwashBuckler Middle Distance Triathlon

Bucklers Hard, Beaulieu, SO42 7XB
1.9 km Swim (O/W) / 90 km Bike / 22km Run

May 29th

New Forest Triathlon

Ellingham WaterSki / Moyles Court School, BH24 3NF
1.1 km Swim (O/W) / 33km Bike / 9km Run

New Forest Novice Triathlon

Ellingham WaterSki / Moyles Court School, BH24 3NF
400 metre Swim (O/W) / 33km Bike / 6km Run

June 12th

Lymington (Yacht Haven) Sprint Triathlon

Lymington Yacht Haven Marina, Lymington, SO41 3QD
750 m Swim (O/W) / 20 km Bike / 5 km Run

June 26th

Gladiator Triathlon

Bucklers Hard, Beaulieu, SO42 7XB
3.8 km Swim (O/W) / 180 km Bike / 42.2 km Run

BoskMan Triathlon

Bucklers Hard, Beaulieu, SO42 7XB
2.7 km Swim (O/W) / 125 km Bike / 21.1 km Run

Aug 21st

New Forest Triathlon

Ellingham WaterSki / Moyles Court School, BH24 3NF
1.1 km Swim (O/W) / 33km Bike / 9km Run

New Forest Novice Triathlon

Ellingham WaterSki / Moyles Court School, BH24 3NF
400 metre Swim (O/W) / 33km Bike / 6km Run

Sept 25th

New Forest Middle Distance Triathlon

Ellingham WaterSki / Sandy Balls Holiday Park, SP6 2JZ
1.9 km Swim (O/W) / 90 km Bike / 22km Run

Race entry and further details:-

www.racenewforest.co.uk

Contact:- jriles@racenewforest.co.uk



RACENEWFOREST

10

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DIY ENERGY

The right nutrition **BOOSTS RUNNING PERFORMANCE** but did you know that you can make your own sports fuel at home? Sarah Ivory asks the experts for their favourite store cupboard recipes



Here's something you already know: running is tough. Whether you're running your first marathon or aiming to beat your 5k PB, you can be pretty sure you don't want a rumbling belly scuppering your time on race day. That's where smart fuelling comes in. Sports snacks and drinks needn't break the bank, you can make your own! From carbohydrate-rich snacks that provide glycogen energy to muscles, to post-run shakes that help repair them, here are the pros' go-to recipes. Feel free to nab them.

THE PROTEIN SHAKE: ALMOND RECOVERY SHAKE

THE COOK: RUNNING COACH, GEORGE ANDERSON

This yummy shake has the perfect blend of recovery nutrients. George Anderson, esteemed coach and training partner for Reading Half Marathon (readinghalfmarathon.com), discovered it by trial and error. "Making the recipe didn't always go smoothly – there was the case of a frothy coconut oil mix," he admits. Why does it work? Bananas and oats are high in carbohydrates, while almond butter and chia seeds are protein-rich. This mix provides

everything your body needs to repair muscle fibres after hard training. "Coconut oil is also a good source of anti-inflammatory fats, and I sometimes add an extra scoop of plain whey powder for an additional protein blast," says Anderson.

MAKE IT: This one is really simple to make. Pour 250ml of almond milk, along with one small banana, a handful of oats, a good scoop of almond butter, a tablespoon of chia seeds, a couple of dates, a handful of spinach and a few ice cubes in a blender. Whizz up until nice and smooth, pour into a glass and drink. Done.



THE ENERGY SNACK: CACAO ENERGY BALLS
THE COOK: ULTRA RUNNER, ROB MARTINEAU

This recipe was created by a health food blogger who Rob Martineau worked with over the summer. “She made them for the entire Tribe team,” reveals Martineau, “and they didn’t last very long in the office!” Packed with natural ingredients like dates, which have one of the highest carbohydrate content

of any fruit, these cacao balls are jammed full of energy. Seeds and nuts also provide protein, while cacao is high in minerals. “Make a big batch at the start of the week and then keep them in the fridge for a pre-run boost,” says Martineau.

MAKE IT: Pit nine Medjool dates and blend them until they form a chunky paste. Next, blend a cup of almonds, one tablespoon of virgin coconut oil, a pinch

of good quality salt and a tablespoon of raw cacao powder until the mixture forms a dough. Add a pod of cacao seeds and pulse a few times. Roll the dough to form small balls, then leave to set in the fridge for a few hours before eating.

Recipe from Tribe performance sports nutrition. Visit wearetribe.co for more ideas or to try a Tribe Pack, a box of five snacks and a mini-journal with recipe ideas.



THE CAFFEINE HIT: MATCHA AND OAT TRUFFLES

THE COOK: YOGA INSTRUCTOR, JULIE MONTAGU

Julie Montagu is a recipe-creating pro who can be found blogging about her delicious plant-based creations over at juliemontagu.com. But we love this particular recipe because it's full of on-trend, and popular coffee alternative, matcha. Matcha is a powdered green tea that is rumoured to boost alertness while simultaneously aiding relaxation, thanks to the amino acid L-theanine found in the leaves. "I call these little guys my cup of coffee, or my shot of espresso, because they wake me up instantly and are so much better for me than a latte, cappuccino or espresso," says Montagu. Eat these truffles on days when you feel too sluggish to train and they'll make you get up and go!

MAKE IT: Put 100g of ground almonds, 130g of oat flour, two tablespoons of raw honey, two tablespoons of melted coconut oil, 50g of macadamia nuts and two teaspoons of matcha powder into a mixing bowl. Mix until you have a sticky, green dough. Roll the mixture into bite-sized balls. Put the remaining matcha powder in a plastic bag and, one by one, drop each ball inside the bag and shake until thoroughly coated in the powder. Store in an airtight container in the fridge for up to one week.

10-MINUTE RECIPES Not a culinary master? Try these easy creations to make your very own sports fuel in the time it takes to complete a warm up!



CHOCOLATE MILKSHAKE

Milk is nature's recovery shake. Packed with the ideal ratio of carbohydrate to protein (from 3:1 to 4:1), it's the perfect post-workout fuel. To enjoy, simply add a couple of teaspoons of chocolate powder to a glass of milk. Or forget the chocolate and drink the milk straight up!



MAPLE & APRICOT ENERGY GEL

This homemade gel from welovemaple.co.uk can be whipped up in a flash. Put 80ml of dried apricots in a pan, add 250ml of water and bring to the boil. Simmer for 10 minutes until the fruit is soft. Add 30ml maple syrup, ¼ tsp salt and blend. Leave to cool, then put in a squidgey bottle.



ORANGE ISOTONIC DRINK

Replace those minerals you lose through sweat by guzzling down this liquid. To create, pour 250ml of orange juice, 250ml of water and a pinch of salt into a drink shaker. Shake well and enjoy! Easy. Don't like orange? Replace it with your favourite flavour juice.

THE PRE-RUN BARS: GINGERBREAD BITES
THE COOK: NUTRITIONAL EXPERT,
CHRISTIAN COATES

Christian Coates knows good food when he sees (or makes) it. As owner of Soulmatefood, a food delivery service at soulmatefood.com, and author of the best-selling book *Fitness Gourmet*, he's used to recommending recipes to sporty types. And these powerful little bites provide the boost of energy that runners need, thanks to all of those carbohydrate-rich dates! Each snack is also full of fibre, which will keep your digestive system in good working order. As Coates points out: "Enjoy the small bites for snack time or mould into bigger bars for fuelling your workouts." You heard the man!

MAKE IT: Preheat the oven to 120°C (250°F) and line a baking tray with baking parchment. Put the dates on a second tray and bake for 10-12 minutes until soft. Pulse 50g of pecans in a processor. Mix the dates down to a pulp in a food mixer, then add the nuts, a tsp of vanilla extract, 2 tsp of water, ½ tsp of cinnamon and ½ tsp of ginger. Slowly add 50g of ground almonds until the mix is a firm dough. Turn it out onto the second baking tray and press flat. Chill til firm then eat. Yum.





Our team of experts are on hand to answer your **RUNNING-RELATED QUESTIONS**, from training to nutrition, health to injury prevention

ASK *the* EXPERTS:

SHOULD I STRETCH AFTER MY RUN?

Q I recently read that stretching before runs is not necessary so I do dynamic movement in my warm-up like lunges. But then I was told that

stretching after my runs is bad too, so now I do not know when to stretch! I think if I don't stretch at all, my muscles will be very sore after my runs. What do you think?
Janice G



It's up to you whether to stretch but there is no evidence that it will benefit you.

A Much of the confusion is down to the fact that what works or feels good for one runner will not necessarily work or feel good for another. As far as 'stretching' before a run (and by 'stretching' I will assume you are referring to 'static' stretching, i.e. holding each stretch position for at least 10 seconds), there is no evidence that it either reduces risk of injury or increases performance. Some studies show it may even slightly reduce performance. That's enough reason for me to drop it entirely from my warm up but to the uninjured runner who says it makes them 'feel' good I say carry on if you want, but you could be using the time to warm up in a potentially more effective way, like the dynamic lunges you mention.

With regards to stretching after a run, research once again fails to show

any of the benefits we assume we are getting. For example, there is no evidence it reduces soreness. Some runners actually suffer less soreness by giving up the static stretching. How? Well, after strenuous physical activity muscles that have been working hard typically have quite a few harmless micro-tears. These micro-tears healing during recovery is what makes us over time get stronger. Trying to pull these micro-tears apart after a run could well lead to an increase in muscle soreness over the next few days and a delay in recovery.

In my opinion, soreness after running is more likely evidence that you have either not warmed up properly or you have simply pushed your body very hard. After a run, my general advice is to lie down, relax and spend five to ten minutes gently circling or opening and closing joints, from ankles up to neck. This gentle 'pumping' of the joints can promote

flushing in and out of fluid and may well guide new muscle fibre growth which is what recovery is all about.

Many runners also believe that stretching reduces risk of injury. This is almost impossible to prove as there are way too many other factors that could be responsible. But let's remember that distance running really doesn't require that much flexibility. How many times when running do you need to touch your toes or do a high kick?! If for some reason you have a reduced range of movement in a specific muscle group then yes, specific stretching to restore that range could help, but as a method of general injury prevention, I believe too many runners spend too much time trying to achieve a range of movement they will never need.

I hope this information is of use to you, Janice. Try the gentle 'circles & pumping movements' I have described above and let us know how it goes!



INJURY MATT PHILLIPS

is a Running Performance Coach & Injury Specialist at StrideUK & Studio57clinic. Follow Matt on Twitter: @sportinjurymatt



A protein drink is more quickly absorbed into your system after a long run.

ENERGY FOOD?

Q I will be running my first marathon (Brighton) in April next year and was hoping you could advise me on what nutrition I should be taking before, during and after. I will be 57 by then and have run 10ks and two half marathons and but can't really get on with gels.

Mal

A Thanks for a great question Mal! One of the most common questions we get about marathon training is about nutrition. Hardly surprising since it's become a controversial and complex topic. But it doesn't have to be complicated. Firstly I'd suggest you get a copy of Renee McGregors' *Training Food*, which will explain in more detail what you need to eat and when for optimum performance but also for recovery and immunity.

You're very sensible to be thinking about your nutrition strategy at this stage. As you train for the marathon, you need plenty of time to practise with products and meals and see what suits you best. Running nutrition is very individual. What works for one person won't be right for another, so the only thing you can do is experiment and see what works for you. If you find certain foods or products upset your stomach then avoid them. It might be worth keeping a training/nutrition diary so you can track what works and what changes you could make.

However... while nutrition is important, it is only part of the jigsaw puzzle. Proper training

principles are often overlooked in our desire to learn how to 'fuel' correctly; there's no amount of pasta or gels will get you round the marathon unless you've trained properly!

So over the next few months you need to train your body to become efficient – so you tap into your fat stores and not your glycogen stores. You do this by running at a slow easy pace; around 70% of your maximum heart rate – or an effort level of 5/6 out of 10 where you can chat easily. Build up your mileage, consistency and long runs with plenty of slow and easy training. If you can become more efficient, you won't need to rely on sports products during the run as much. The 'long run' is king! so work on building that up and plan to get five or six long runs of around 18 miles in the diary long before the marathon.

Your post-run nutrition is vital – especially after a long or hard run or a race. You have a 'golden window' of 30-60 minutes after your run where your body is most receptive to re-fuelling, so in this time make sure you have a recovery shake or snack to re-stock your glycogen stores. You need a mix of protein and carbohydrate and ideally this should be in the form of a drink, which is easily absorbed. 'For Goodness Shakes'

is great or make your own in a blender with protein powder, banana, milk and honey. Refuelling properly will help with recovery and allow you to run well again the following day.

You mention you don't get on with 'gels' and this is very common with many runners. They tend to sit in the stomach and can make you feel nauseous. It might be worth trying different brands and see how you get on – some gels are more 'liquid' than others – and try taking tiny amounts of the gel at a time rather than swallowing the whole thing in one go.

You do, however, need some form of carbohydrate during your long runs and in the marathon itself. This needs to be in a format which is easy to carry on the run, easy to swallow and easily absorbed. Instead of a 'liquid' gel, you could try more solid forms of carbohydrate such as Clif Shot Blocks, Powerbar PowerGel Shots or Honey Stinger Chews. All of these products are like solid lumps of gel and dissolve slowly in your mouth, so you don't get that 'hit' to your stomach. Some runners also swear by Jelly Babies or even more traditional Dextro Energy sweets. Either way, just try different brands now in training so you'll be prepared come marathon day! Good luck.



COACH SARAH RUSSELL

has over 20 years experience in the fitness industry as a running coach, trainer, freelance writer and athlete. She also has a Masters degree in Sport Science and is a qualified England Athletics running coach
sarah-russell.co.uk

HOW CAN I ENJOY MY TRAINING?

Q I've got a dilemma - my best friend and I were thinking of signing up to run the London marathon and running for a charity which is close to both our hearts. While it all sounds really exciting and I'd love the physical and mental challenge, I'm anxious because of a past experience. I signed up to run a half marathon a few years ago with a friend, and ended up not enjoying the training at all. I felt pressured, negative and anxious because life/projects got in the way. I couldn't seem to prioritise my training, stay motivated and complete every run. As a result, I constantly felt disappointed in myself. I didn't make the start line and grew apart from that friend which was really upsetting. What can I do differently to make this next marathon training experience different? **Lisa Stirling**

A Great question! And one that lots of people ask me. Signing up to a race is the easy part; sticking to the training and maintaining motivation is the challenging part. There are, however, a few key areas you could focus on which may not only help you enjoy your training and new challenge, they will also transfer into other areas of your life, with positive

effects. The key areas are: personalise it, organisation and finding your 'why'. We'll talk through each one:

PERSONALISE IT

The first thing to do is sit down with paper and pen and map out your life 'as you know it'. Write down all of your commitments, hobbies, work/family responsibilities – and try to gauge how much time you need for each one. It's a rough guide (some like to create a mind map, some like

lists, some just jot down words in groups) and the aim is to identify how much spare time you have – time that you'll fit your marathon training into. This does two things: it makes you feel like you've exfoliated your brain (i.e. clears your head!) and boosts your positivity as you start to see actual real time that you have available to train.

ORGANISATION

Compare your list with your best

friend so that you can synchronise both of your spare time. Then schedule in a couple of runs a week (together). Mix it up and meet at hers, at yours, in a park, at various times of the day that suit both of you. Be flexible – if you suddenly find you can only meet for a half hour instead of an hour, so what? Meet/run for the half hour – it's better than not running at all and you can always aim to find 15-20 mins later to do some strength work or foam rolling (which is also recommended as a key part of your training plan). Be realistic, keep the pressure off. Use a wall-planner and keep it visible in a part of your house you'll see often. Have a back-up running buddy who you know has time and flexibility, i.e. is likely to be able to meet for a run at short notice. Find a mentor who can offer support – this doesn't need to be a runner, just someone you aspire to and whom you trust.

WHAT'S YOUR WHY?

Identifying your why or real purpose for taking on the marathon challenge is key to staying motivated. Having a personal purpose means motivation is likely to be intrinsic, rather than external - this means you'll naturally want to get out and run because it's important to you. You mention you are running for a charity that's close to your heart – that's your green flag right there. Good luck!



PSYCHOLOGY

EVIE SERVENTI

is deputy editor at **Running Fitness** magazine. She is a qualified journalist, keen runner and triathlete, and health mentor. She is also studying sports psychology and has a dedicated interest in training your mind @hotoffthepageevieserventi.com

Get organised and your training schedule will almost write itself!



BLADDER PROBLEMS...

Q I am 40 years of age and have started running in the past six months to try and lead a healthier lifestyle. Since having children, I simply haven't had the time to exercise, and getting into running was a real struggle at first. I'm starting to build up my fitness, which is great, and I'm really enjoying going out for runs, but I've been experiencing leakage of urine when I run and it

seems to be getting worse! Sometimes my bladder completely empties and I'm absolutely soaked. I've tried going to the loo right before I set off and I'm at the point now where I have started altering my route and running when it's dark to avoid embarrassment. Is this a common problem? I really don't want to give up running – is there anything you can suggest to help?

Sarah



HEALTH DR YVETTE BRINDLE

Yvette is a General Practitioner in Chester. She is trained in women's health and has a keen interest in running, fitness well-being, weight control and nutrition. She enjoys running with her local group and entering races for charity.

A Well done on getting back into fitness after having children. It is tough when you've had a long period away from exercise, but it will be worth it. What you are

describing is 'stress incontinence', which is the unintentional leakage of urine when pressure increases on the bladder, such as when coughing, sneezing or exercising. It is common and underreported, as many people do not seek help. It is a lot more common in women, especially after child birth, and it usually occurs as a result of weakening in the pelvic floor muscles. These muscles provide support to the bladder, keeping the urine locked in until it is ready to be released. If the muscles aren't strong, exercise such as running can trigger the leakage of urine.

One in five women over the age of 40 suffer with some degree of stress incontinence. GPs often diagnose it from symptoms alone, without the need for further tests. However, sometimes they ask for a patient to complete a 'bladder diary'. This is a record of how much you drink and

how much urine you pass over a short period of time. It is helpful in excluding other types of incontinence, that aren't related to the pelvic floor.

The mainstay of treatment involves strengthening the pelvic floor muscles, giving better support to the bladder. A doctor or physiotherapist can advise you on how best to do pelvic floor exercises. Like running, results won't happen overnight. These exercises are a commitment, to be continued for a few months before a real benefit will be seen. Keeping your weight under control will reduce any downward pressure on your bladder and also help your symptoms.

For runners, there are also special shorts available to buy, which can offer some compression support to the pelvic floor when running (visit evbsport.com). It is worth having a look at the types of fluid you drink, reducing caffeine if you can as this stimulates the bladder. Finally, if the problem persists, there are surgical options available, which again aim to strengthen the pelvic floor. This is a common condition with many available treatments to try, so try not to let it affect your running.



Dark running bottoms will help disguise leaks while you work on strengthening your pelvic floor.



DO YOU HAVE A QUESTION? Email the team at rf.ed@kelsey.co.uk
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WHAT'S IN YOUR KIT BAG?

JODI WILLIAMS

We chat to the Commonwealth and European silver medallist



HEADPHONE & IPOD

Crucial to my warm-up! I love to go into my own little corner, zone out and get on with my warm-up and make sure I get ready properly.

FOAM ROLLER

This is an essential – I use it before a session to check all my muscles are stretched.



ADIDAS BOOST TRAINERS

– Literally, the most comfortable trainers ever! I do all my running sessions in those.

POST-TRAINING PROTEIN

So important for recovery.

LIFTING SHOES

Really crucial for me in the gym, for all my Olympic lifts – cleans,

squats, etc. Lifting shoes are a must.

POST-TRAINING MEAL/SNACK

I always make sure I bring a mini lunch with me for after training, just to refuel as soon as I've

finished. I think for athletes, organisation is key with food; the Tesco Beautifully Balanced range is so quick and easy, plus they're high in proteins so they're perfect for after training. The Caribbean Chicken is my personal favourite.



“I always make sure I bring a mini lunch with me for after training, just to refuel as soon as I've finished.”



BLOGGER OF THE MONTH



This month, Scottish middle distance runner **Eilish McColgan** tells *RF* about her experience of being injured and coming back from it...

An injury can set you back, but never lose sight of why you run in the first place.



realisation that you will have to spend X amount of weeks on the sofa, watching pedestrians jog past your window. I found myself getting jealous when a stranger jogged by – a complete stranger I had never met before.

A muscle you can't injure from over-training? The brain. So keep it active and fill it with positivity. Jotting down my thoughts and altered training routine into a daily journal became my way of rationalising things.

Finally, I can see light at the end of the tunnel! The comeback trail is never an easy one, fenced with aches and pains along the way, but it's important to address why you've been placed in this situation. Perhaps there are weaknesses to be tackled with strength and conditioning, mechanics to be adjusted with orthotics alongside a horde of other contributing factors. Unfortunately, injuries happen for a reason and it's the best opportunity to put changes in place, to avoid another disruption later.

COPING WITH INJURY

People often ask, 'Why do you run?' Such a simple question, often with such a complex answer. For me, running has always been a way of life. It's the only time I feel truly free, clearing my mind of thoughts and focusing on nothing but my own two feet. While running has brought me some of my happiest memories, it's equally given me some of my worst. Something that every runner experiences, no matter how fast or slow, from first time joggers to elite

Olympians, are injuries. They are inevitable with the sport we do; inflicting miles and miles of impact with nothing but our two little legs and a pair of trainers to broker the crash. Personally, 2015 has been year to forget. After spending 10 months on the side lines due to a broken ankle – I'm finally stepping off this roller-coaster.

MORE THAN PHYSICAL

Non-runners often don't understand the frustrations that injuries bring. Months of planning, months of training, entering future races; all wasted ventures. You're quickly swallowed up by the dreaded

THE COMEBACK

I am beyond thrilled to be back jogging but I sometimes find myself a little underwhelmed by it all – comparing times and distances to my pre-injured self. It's vital to keep a mental note of improvements, regardless of how painstakingly gradual it may be. During an injury, it's important to remember your personal 'WHY'. Why do you throw yourself out the door, in torrential rain to run a few miles or drag your body around a marathon? Everyone is different so remember why and don't let an injury knock you down. The athlete within is still there, it's just temporarily masked, waiting to be unleashed. No matter how slow or how far you run; once a runner, always a runner.



EAT THIS

An *RF* favourite, nutritious Clif Bars were developed by Gary Erickson when he became fed up with the limited selection of energy snacks on offer. January sees the launch of new flavour Coconut Chocolate Chip – we've had a taste and can recommend it! Find it in Ocado, WHSmith and various sports retailers for £1.60, clifbar.co.uk.



DRINK THIS

Avoid sugary smoothies and juices and opt for a naturally delicious juice by Moju. Packed only with pure fresh fruit juice, the flavour and sweetness comes from the ingredients themselves, there are no added nasties. Moju says it's stupidly healthy and we agree! £2.95 per bottle, mojudrinks.com.

Read more of Eilish's experiences at eilishmccolgan.blogspot.co.uk

TIM DON

British triathlete Tim has competed in three **OLYMPIC GAMES**, won three **WORLD TITLES** and has an astounding 10k personal best of 28.56. Who better to ask for some running tips?

INTERVIEW Rebecca Gibbs

You've been in sport for over two decades. How do you stay motivated?

The thought of sitting at a desk doing a 9-5! On the whole I don't need much motivation to swim, bike or run, or go to the gym. I class myself as never really working a day in my life because I'm doing something I love. Living the dream.

What's been your greatest achievement in triathlon so far?

Still being a professional after 20 years, representing my country at the Olympic Games, winning World Titles – they're pretty good!

And your biggest disappointment?

The Beijing Olympics in 2008. I was having a great year, and was one of the guys that would have been fighting for a medal. And unfortunately, three days before the race, I came down with severe food poisoning. I lost a lot of weight and was very poorly. That was probably my best shot of fighting for a medal at the Olympics. When you put four years into one race, and something like that happens... It was tough to take at the time and it took me a while to get over.

You've had some amazing results with triathlon, but you've also struggled with injury and illness. What have those tough times taught you?

Definitely: Never give up. I think it's important – vital – to have a great group of friends and support structure around me when I'm injured, a doctor; my wife, and friends. You learn to lean on those guys when the chips are down.

Family life puts it into perspective: there is more to life than swim, bike, run. At the end of the day, whether I've been

injured and I'm miserable or not, my four-year-old daughter doesn't care. She's still going to love me.

Has becoming a dad changed you?

I'm a lot more tired! There's not so much down time. I've got a four-year-old daughter, Matilda, and an eight-and-a-half-month-old son, Hugo. When I'm having bad days or I've got a niggle, it's great to come home to someone who just doesn't care about anything like that! And when I go away to races and training camps, I make the most of them because I know my wife and myself are sacrificing a lot – leaving her on her own with two kids, and obviously I'm not there to be with them. I like to think that I work a harder now when I am training.

What do you eat before a race?

Because it's such a long day – Kona Ironman in Hawaii starts at 6:30 – I get up early and normally have a bagel with some butter and jam, and then I have an energy bar and my energy drink which contains carbohydrates and electrolytes. Staying hydrated is key, especially when you're racing for eight hours.

Now that I'm doing the longer stuff, it's not so much the evening before; it's the lunch before – I like to have a big lunch, so maybe a big plate of rice and chicken. And then, if I can, I always get a nice four cheeses pizza in – because you get a quite nervous before, so you want to have something you enjoy eating. I've won a couple of World Titles on four cheeses pizza, so if it ain't broken...!

Do you have any pre-race rituals?

Not really. I try to be very organised four to five days out. I set everything out on

the bed in the hotel – what I need for the swim, the run etc, and just go over that. But I don't shave my head the night before the race or anything like that. In triathlons anything can go wrong, so you've got to be quite fluid in your approach and your attitude. You could turn up to the race and all of a sudden it's freezing cold, so you need to change everything you're wearing; or your bike could have a puncture. I just try to control what I can control and be as prepared as possible come race day.

You've got a reputation of being relaxed and fun; do you ever get stressed or anxious before a race?

I wouldn't say "stressed"... You get anxious – you always ask yourself the questions: Have I done enough training? Have I done too much? Have I prepared correctly? Have I got the right equipment? But I've been doing this long enough. Maybe in the last hour or so I get nervous, but once the gun goes, it's my job; I know what I'm doing and how I need to do it so it's kind of like autopilot.

What do you think is the one thing that sets you apart from other athletes?

This sport has given me a heck of a lot, and I like to give back a lot. I do some coaching for some age-groupers; in the past I've helped out at junior clubs – things like that. I don't know if I do anything that's particularly different to any other pros. I've got a passion for the sport and maybe that comes out in how I race, and how I talk about triathlon.

What made triathlon the right sport for you?

Growing up, I always ran and swam and mountain-biked; I was always into sport; I always wanted to go to the Olympic Games. When I was 14, I ran with a running group with fantastic runners: Sam Haughian and Ben



**You've just got to believe in
yourself and never give up**

ESSENTIAL INFO

Tim grew up near Mo Farah, and as juniors, the pair were members of the same running club





As a professional triathlete, Tim looks for running economy as well as speed.

Whitby, and Mo Farah, so I was never going to be a runner because Sam and Ben went to my school, and they'd won European medals at track and field and had been to the Commonwealth Games.

I always could swim, so I got a job at Hampton open air swimming pool as a lifeguard during my A-Levels. I discovered a triathlon club there and I just loved the fact that you could jump out of the swimming pool, and on to your bike; on to your run. It was a passion from the start.

That was about 1992, and I've been doing it ever since, so for me it was just being in the right place at the right time; I was relatively talented as a junior and I had a good coach and won a junior World Title and carried on doing triathlons. When I started triathlon it wasn't an Olympic sport, and then in 1998 that all changed (for the next Olympics in Sydney). I'm lucky enough to have gone to three Olympics.

Tim has an impressive 10k PB of 28.56.



If duathlon was an Olympic discipline do you think you would have a medal?

Definitely; I'd have got loads! I don't know. I've been World Champion, and won a [World Champion] silver medal and won medals at the European Championships. It's very arrogant to say "I would have won". I like to think that when I'm in great shape, I'd be in the fight to win a medal. But it's a funny old game; anything can happen.

Looking back over your career, would you have done anything differently?

I think probably that piece of chicken three days before Beijing! No, I'm very lucky; I've had some great coaches. Sure, there are maybe split decisions in races where maybe I attacked when I shouldn't have and that had an outcome, but I definitely don't regret any decisions.

What's the best advice you've been given?

I think the classic is: it's never over until it's over. You race to the line – you never give up in racing. I did the North American Championships this year, and I had a mechanical on the bike – I was in the lead and I lost a lot of time. When I came off the bike, I heard the splits of the guys who were ahead of me and thought, "Oh my god! I'm never going to catch them." And in the dying miles, I went past them – so you've always just got to keep on fighting.

It's the same with training. When

you're going through tough times, you just need to do the training. The race isn't won in the light; it's won behind closed doors, when you're sweating and hurting and crying. You've just got to believe in yourself and never give up. And that goes for anything I do: whether it's with my family, my coaching, my training, my sport.

What was it like training with [high-profile triathlon coach] Brett Sutton?

Brilliant! I won my senior World Title with him; I qualified for the Olympic Games with him. He's just such a unique person. He sees things that other coaches don't see. He gives you confidence that I think most coaches don't give you. He's very good at reading people. I'd known Brett for years before I worked with him; some of my friends were coached by him, and there's a lot of respect. He's definitely the world leader in triathlon coaching.

What is your most crucial bit of kit?

When you're training as much as we do, you don't want to get injured, and most of the injuries triathletes get are running injuries because we are running when we're fatigued and tired. For me, having the right footwear and having a choice is great. I train a lot in the On Cloudsurfer, and I do my faster stuff and racing in the On Cloudracer and Cloud. For me, having a go-to shoe is great.

What do you think about when you train? Do you run to music?

Normally I only put music on when I'm in the gym, on the treadmill. When I'm out running and riding, I don't listen to music – I like to focus on the session. Or when it's a long, easy run, often I do it with a couple of mates, so we chew the fat and take the mick out of each other.

What do you listen to?

At the moment I'm listening to Ed Sheeran. And I'm listening to lots of the soundtrack from "Frozen", because it's on my phone from my daughter. !

Running has always been your strongest discipline in triathlon. What advice would you give to a new runner?

Don't rush into it. And do a little and often – especially if you haven't run for a long time, or you're relatively new to running, as you can get carried away and get injured.



Tim Don, 37, from Richmond, UK, currently lives and trains in Colorado, US. He competed in the Sydney, Athens and Beijing Olympic Games. Tim is sponsored by On (on-running.com). Find out more: timdon.com
Follow Tim: [@trithedon](https://twitter.com/trithedon), facebook.com/trithedon, instagram.com/tri_thedon

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TONY PHILLIPS

A MILE EACH DAY

Tony ups his daily mile to 10 to run with an ordinary man doing something **EXTRAORDINARY** and witnesses the transformative power of sporting solidarity to transform and heal lives

My mile each day experiment recently led to an inspiring experience when I was asked if I'd like to run with Ben Smith when he came to my area as part of his 401 Challenge to run 401 marathons in 401 days. Aside from the fact that Ben is running a marathon every single day, while I'm running between one and two miles most days, I was intrigued and gratefully accepted the offer.

I wondered what would make anyone want to attempt such a feat. Run a marathon every single day for more than a year? How on earth could his body recover enough to do it again and again day after day with only a few hours to rest and recover?

So, I joined a group of runners and we ran with Ben to run part of a full marathon. When I joined Ben, he had already completed 58 consecutive daily marathons, and to my non-expert eye he looked a lot fresher than I felt.

POSITIVE ACTION

I had the privilege of running alongside Ben for a couple of miles, chatting to him, and I was struck by what a really nice, ordinary guy he was, but that he was doing something quite extraordinary. It's quite incredible what the human body and mind can accomplish when you've got a powerful enough why.

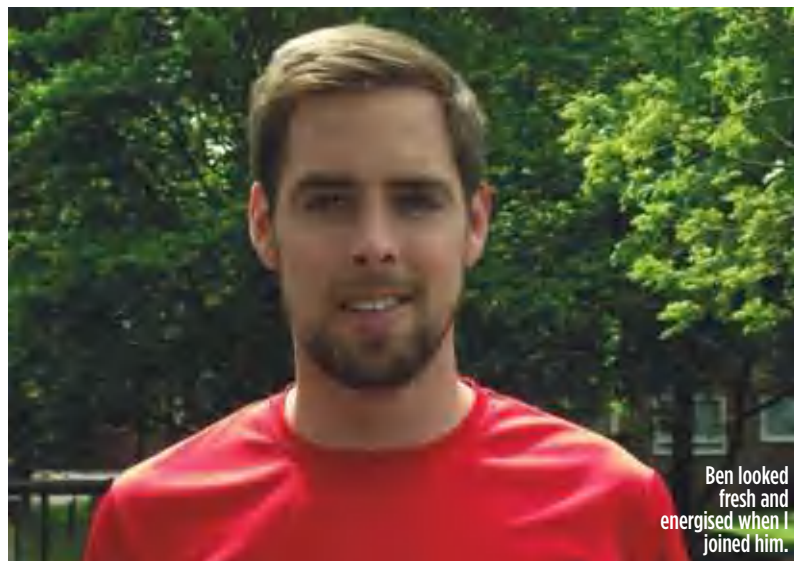
Ben's why is very personal to him. He is raising awareness and hopefully £250,000 for Kidscape and Stonewall (I know because I'm still proudly wearing my 401 Challenge wrist band) to help support young people who are victims of bullying.

Ben was on the receiving end of bullying as a boy, to the extent that he tried to take his life. Running is one of the key factors that has enabled Ben to turn his life around and do something amazing for others.

INSPIRING OTHERS

The other thing that struck me both on my ten miles I ran with Ben, and by following his exploits since, is that people are coming out to support him and run

Running is one of the key factors that has enabled Ben to turn his life around



Ben looked fresh and energised when I joined him.

TONY PHILLIPS

is a personal coach working with entrepreneurs and business leaders. An enthusiastic back of the pack runner, in January 2010 he began an experiment to see how many consecutive days he could run at least a mile. Tony is fascinated by the lessons running and daily habits teach him about life.

Follow Tony on Twitter: @AMileEachDay or coachingapproach.co.uk

with him wherever he goes – yet time and again I've heard that while many start off with the intention to support him, almost every day people are breaking their own personal distance bests, running further than they've ever run before, and repeatedly saying that they couldn't have done it without Ben's support and encouragement.

I've said many times in my column how much running has given me, and how it defines my life. It was a massive pleasure and a huge privilege to share ten miles of running with Ben, and to see first hand what a force for good running can be both for the people who do it and for the world as a whole.

And you never know, a person who's reading this who is just taking up or rediscovering running may in turn inspire someone else to have a go, and they may end up being the next Ben Smith.

Small steps can lead to adventures we haven't even imagined.

MAKING A REAL DIFFERENCE

George Bernard Shaw, Nobel Prize-winning British playwright, said:

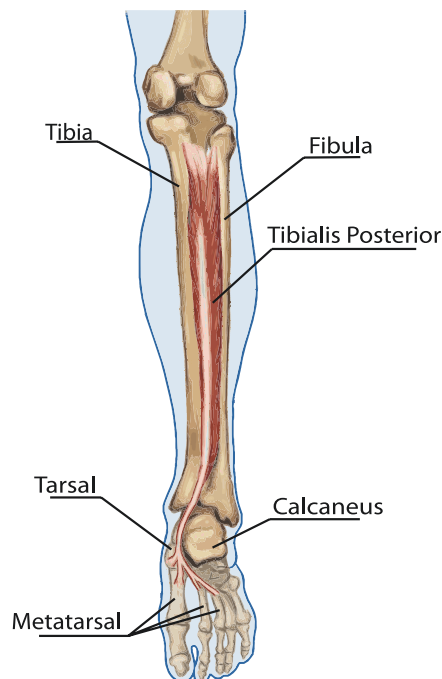
"The reasonable man adapts himself to the conditions that surround him... The unreasonable man adapts surrounding conditions to himself... All progress depends on the unreasonable man."

So I'd like to say thank you to Ben, for taking on something that's truly unreasonable and remarkable, and for challenging all of our beliefs about what could indeed be possible for all of us.



PB OR TP?

Familiar with your **TIBIALIS POSTERIOR**? It's the primary stabilising force of the midfoot during running, and if you're experiencing ankle or shin pain then it could be to blame. Find out how to recovery properly and minimise chance of re-injury



The tibialis posterior is behind the shin bone

ANATOMY OF THE TIBIALIS POSTERIOR

This muscle is, as its name implies, located 'behind' the 'tibia' (shin bone). It starts on the upper part of the tibia (shin bone) and fibula (thinner bone on the outside of the lower leg), travels down the back of the lower leg and crosses over at the

bottom to pass behind the inner ankle and under the inner arch of the foot. The tendon then attaches to pretty much all the bones on the bottom of the foot, including the long bones (metatarsals) of the second, third and fourth toes. The fact that it attaches to so many places on the foot is why overloading can cause pain in so many areas of the foot and leg, often mimicking symptoms of a stress fracture or compartment syndrome.



Most runners are familiar with the names of the two calf muscles: the gastrocnemius and the soleus, and many perform weekly calf stretching and strengthening exercises in the hope of reducing risk of injury and improving performance. However, fewer of us are aware of a muscle that lies deep under the calves that can often be the source of pain on the inner calf, shin, arch and/or sole of the foot. Allow us to introduce you to the tibialis posterior (TP).

FUNCTION OF THE TIBIALIS POSTERIOR

Like the calf muscles, the TP assists in acceleration of ankle "plantarflexion" (pushing the foot downwards) and deceleration of "dorsiflexion" (pulling the foot backwards towards the shin).

However, because it runs from the outside of the leg to the inside of the ankle, it also accelerates ankle "inversion" (lifting of the inner arch of the foot) and decelerates "eversion" (falling of the inner arch). This combination of movement makes the TP the primary stabilising force of the midfoot during running. On landing, it helps the foot adapt to the ground surface and then it provides a solid base for the foot to push off. Inhibition of the TP due to weakness

or overloading will reduce its ability to stabilise the foot, opening the door to pain and injury.

INJURY SYMPTOMS

Typical symptoms of TP injury include pain down the inner calf and/or inner shin, behind the back of the inner ankle (swelling may occur here where the tendon passes), under the inner arch, and on the sole of the foot. If you have these symptoms while running and have found that reducing your level of activity has not helped, we recommend you see a therapist who specialises in running-related injuries. Given the importance of the role of the TP as chief stabiliser, it is important to act sooner rather than later.

REHABILITATION

Caught early enough, runners can recover from a TP injury via conservative (non-surgical) rehabilitation. Once diagnosed, recommendations will typically include the following:

1 ACTIVITY MODIFICATION

As runners, we often find it difficult to know exactly when we need to stop. We get used to niggles and accept them as part of our training. A professional will be able to assess you

properly and advise you as to how much you need to pull back from your activity levels, as well as identifying anything else that may be aggravating the situation.

2 CHANGE OF FOOTWEAR/SOE INSERT

Modifying footwear often proves to be an excellent way of off-loading a troublesome tendon and giving your system time to recover. In the case of the tibialis posterior, extra arch support via a more supportive shoe or an insert has been shown to help, with an off-the-shelf insert often working just as well as an expensive custom made one. That said, bear in mind that this strategy is unlikely to address the source of the issue. Appropriate strength training and activity modification will be key players in ensuring that in time you no longer need the extra support or insert.

3 STRETCHING

Research suggests that as part of a complete rehab plan, daily calf stretching can help. Stretches should be held for at least 30 seconds and should include both the straight-leg version (with the toes up on a step or against a wall) and the bent-knee version (to stretch the soleus muscle). Make sure you do not allow the arch to drop during the stretch.

Caught early enough, runners can recover from TP injury via non-surgical rehab

Stretching the calf muscles daily has been shown to help prevent injuries to the tibialis posterior

Many runners also find success by using a foam roller to relax the calf muscles and promote recovery.

4 STRENGTHENING Stretching can help but strengthening is what your body will need in order to prepare itself for a return to trouble-free running, and to reduce the chances of injury in future. You may find that initially you are not able to handle much resistance and will fatigue quickly. This is normal. The important thing is that you start at a sensible level and slowly increase the resistance over time. Too many runners do their “3 sets of 15” without really thinking about the exercise or fatiguing sufficiently to cause the body to get stronger. If after a month you are still working with the same level of resistance, you have obviously not made anything stronger.

Strengthening rehab normally starts with the use of a resistance band (the colour indicates level of tension) to strengthen your ability to tilt the sole of the foot outwards, inwards, and pulling the foot back towards the shin. All the exercises should involve a slow return to the start position. For example, a tempo of 1 second to push out, 2 seconds to hold still, 3 seconds to slowly return to start position.

RESISTED ANKLE EVERSION

Wrap an exercise band around your left foot and hold the band in your right hand.

Put your right foot next to the left and place pressure on the band.

Keeping both legs straight, tilt the left foot downwards and outwards so the sole moves to face outwards (while keeping the right foot stationary).

Hold this position for 2 seconds and then slowly return the foot to the start position. Repeat 10-15 times and then swap feet.

If you can do more than 15 repetitions without fatiguing, you need to progress to a stronger band.

RESISTED ANKLE INVERSION

Wrap an exercise band around your left foot, holding the band in your left hand.

Cross your right leg over the left and use your right foot to place pressure on the band.

Keeping your legs crossed and knees straight, tilt the left foot downwards and inwards so the sole moves to face inwards (while keeping the right foot stationary).

Hold this position for 2 seconds and then slowly return the foot to the start position. Repeat 10-15 times and then swap feet.

If you can do more than 15 repetitions without fatiguing, you need to progress to a stronger band.

TEST YOURSELF!

One commonly used test for TP dysfunction is the single leg heel raise. Stand on the symptomatic leg and try raising yourself up on to tip toe. If this action creates or intensifies your symptoms then it is likely the TP has been injured. Left untreated, an aggravated TP can lead to a “posterior tibial tendon dysfunction”, where in severe cases you will not be able to lift the heel off the floor at all. In these cases, surgery may be the only option so it’s very much a case of get it sorted now rather than later.

RESISTED ANKLE DORSIFLEXION

Tie one end of an exercise band to a stationary object (post, heavy table, bed, etc)

Sitting on the floor, wrap the other end of the band around the end of your foot.

Keeping the leg straight, pull your foot backwards towards the shin.

Hold this position for 2 seconds and then slowly return the foot to the start position. Repeat 10-15 times and then swap feet.

If you can do more than 15 repetitions without fatiguing, you need to progress to a stronger band.

Once strength gains are seen, strengthening exercises are normally progressed to include single-leg heel raises, walking on tip toes, single leg balance exercises, etc. As per the band exercises, it is important to start at the right level and slowly increase the resistance so that fatigue is reached by 15 repetitions, or in the case of walking on tip toes fatigue by 30 steps. To ensure a safe and effective progression of exercises, we recommended you seek advice from a professional.

5 GAIT ANALYSIS

In many cases, an overloaded TP is down to a restriction elsewhere in the body, such as the hip, knee, ankle or big toe. To establish if this is the case, somebody is going to need to see you run. A full body video gait analysis can be a great way of identifying movement patterns that may be causing an overloading of the TP. Once identified, a combination of suitable conditioning exercises and real-time running drills can be put into effect to ensure that you do not find yourself back in the same position a few months down the line. Too many runners do their rehab and return to running only to find the same issue return.

HOW ABOUT YOU?

If you have suffered from an issue related to the tibialis posterior we would love to hear from you. Share your experience by emailing: rf.ed@kelsey.co.uk



At the top of the Eggishorn with the Aletsch glacier in the background.



Swiss training camp

Have you ever wondered what training camps are **REALLY** like? *RF*'s Stewart Haynes took a trip to Fiesch in Switzerland to go running, swimming and cycling in the mountains



The beautiful scenery of Fiesch in the Valais region of Switzerland.

After being let down by the good old English summer, and in need of a training boost, I ventured to pastures new in Fiesch, Switzerland – a ski resort in the winter, come mountainous running and cycling paradise in the summer.

The trip got off to a flying start as I boarded the same plane as Professor Brian Cox, the broadcaster, author and physicist. It was a reassuring sign that I was heading to a place with something more to offer than just good wine and chocolate.

I stayed at Hotel Eggishorn, based in the clouds at 2,222m above sea level. The views were breath-taking and enough to inspire anyone to get out and just run.

THE TRAINING DAY 1:

WARM-UP RUN: After meeting with the coaches (provided by Indurance Switzerland) and the rest of the team, we ventured for a run to get our legs moving and also to work on the technical aspects of running. That we were running at such high altitude



ABOVE LEFT Climbing the Furka Pass in wet weather. ABOVE RIGHT Snow covered summit of the Furka Pass. BELOW LEFT All up for the 7am mobility session. BELOW MIDDLE Descending the breathtaking Grimsel Pass. BELOW RIGHT Everyone enjoys a welcome break at the top of the Furka Pass.



was instantly noticeable, and it took a few kilometres to find a comfortable pace and rhythm. The coaches filmed us from various angles, which they analysed and explained in a presentation over dinner.

DAY 2:

CYCLING (THE TOUGH DAY): A refreshing 7am mobility session set us up for the day. We then collected our bikes from the local bike shop, which had a selection of new BMC road bikes that would put some professional race teams to shame.

I'm a big fan of using cycling as a way to improve running; the ability to push the body to such limits with such low impact has always been an attractive benefit for me.

We cycled 40 miles in total, which took in two great climbs: the Furka Pass (7.1m, 2,866ft, 7.6 per cent) and the Grimsel Pass (3.1m 1,442ft, 6.6 per cent), where the greenery at the bottom soon turned to snow at the top. The roads were smooth and quiet, which, combined with the scenery, made it the most enjoyable day I've ever experienced on a bike.

The coaching team catered for all cycling abilities, splitting us into groups that encouraged us to push ourselves. The bike shop owner also provided a support vehicle, which provided spare parts, clothes, food and drink.

SWIMMING:

After an inspiring morning on the bike, we headed to the local swimming pool for a 1-hour coached, swim session. The coaches took us through several

swimming exercises to improve our technique. We were also filmed in the water ready for analysis the same evening.

DAY 3:

TRAIL RUN:

A fantastic day of cycling on day two was followed by an equally as amazing run to Eggishorn (viewpoint of the Aletsch Glacier, with 9,374ft max elevation). The 5.9-mile trail run took us up 2,782ft and into an exhilarating tunnel through the centre of a mountain. We came out to the bottom of the glacier surrounded by lakes and ponds, which was almost inviting enough to warrant a wild dip. From the bottom, we zigzagged our way up the picturesque trails and over a rock field to the viewpoint, which unveiled the truly surreal view of Europe's largest glacier.

The viewpoint was also accessible by cable car, which was our chosen means of descent – a wise move after consuming a couple of Swiss hot chocolates and pastries from a café at the top.

THE FOOD

We ate at a family-run restaurant that overlooked the mountains. It regularly found itself engulfed in clouds, only for them to just as frequently clear and reveal snow-capped mountains in every direction.

The food itself was local, hearty and tasty – exactly what was needed after long days exercising in the mountains. We ate steak, venison and pork with plenty of vegetables and potatoes.

Vegetarians and vegans were also catered for.

Information

Training Camp

Organised by Indurance Switzerland (indurance.ch), coaches include Judith Wyder (four time World Orienteering Champion) and Gabriel Lombriser (pro Duathlete). The three-day running camp is £141. We stayed at Hotel Eggishorn (hotel-eggishorn.ch).

Switzerland Tourism

For more information visit MySwitzerland.com or call the Switzerland Travel Centre on 0800 100 200 30 or email info.uk@myswitzerland.com. For packages, trains and air tickets: sales@stc.co.uk.

Travel

Swiss International Air Lines flies from London Heathrow, London City, Birmingham and Manchester to Zurich. Fares start from £63* one-way. For reservations call 0845 6010956 or visit swiss.com.

Swiss Travel System

By road, rail and waterway throughout Switzerland, the Swiss Travel System provides a range of travel passes and tickets for visitors from abroad. The Swiss Transfer Ticket covers a round-trip between the airport/Swiss border and your destination. Prices are £104 in second class and £167 first class. For more information call 0800 100 200 30 or visit swisstourism.co.uk.



RUNNING JACKETS

Don't let the cold put you off. Head out in our pick of these great **WINTER WARMERS**



ASICS LITE-SHOW WINTER JACKET £80

This jacket ticks all the boxes. It will keep you warm and dry, and is designed for maximum visibility. Made from a wind and water-repellent fabric, it is available in two colours – pink and orange – each with plenty of reflective taping across the body, arms and the zipper to keep you visible. There are also two handy front pockets. asics.co.uk



NIKE AEROLOFT FLASH GILET £160

Great to wear on top of a thermal base layer, this gilet will keep you warm and dry. The 800-fill goose-down gives great insulation but is lightweight too, meaning the gilet packs down in to a small zipped pocket. The multi-coloured print has reflective detailing which makes it ideal for those winter nights. It is available in four colours. store.nike.com



THE NORTH FACE STORM STOW JACKET £155

This ultra lightweight jacket is fully waterproof, and packs handily away into its own sleeve, making it the perfect jacket for emergency weather protection on those long runs. It has an adjustable and fully stowable hood and visor, which is handy for when the weather gets really bad. thenorthface.eu



NEW BALANCE BEACON JACKET £130

This may look like a regular running jacket, but with three levels of visibility plus wind and water resistance, it's a notch above. By day, the bright colour makes you easily seen; under street lights, the reflective strips kick in; and in darkness the Glow technology makes it glow in the dark. Just charge in direct light for 10 minutes before you go. newbalance.co.uk



VAUDE LIERNE JACKET £120

Made from environmentally friendly material, this jacket will be ideal for the worst conditions this winter. The Ceplex Active technology makes the jacket waterproof, windproof and breathable while the adjustable hood will give added protection. There are two front zip pockets and adjustable Velcro cuffs. Available in eight colours. vaude.com



SALOMON FAST WING JACKET £70

This slim-fitting shell from Salomon gives great protection from the wind and light rain showers. Packing into its own chest pocket, the Fast Wing is all about minimal weight and is ideal for adventure running when you need something which is easy to store. It is available in five colours. salomon.com/uk

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Share your images with us
on Facebook and
Twitter



EXTRA KIT Stay cosy and safe



BUFF WINDPROOF ENTON BEANIE HAT £36.25

Buff have a large range of headwear items for this winter, but the Enton Beanie is our favourite. The Gore Windstopper fabric ensures the wind will not bother you, and the fleece lining will keep you warm. The design looks great too.

buffwear.co.uk

ASICS KAYANO 22 LITE-SHOW £155

The Kayano has been at the forefront of running shoe development for over 20 years, and this version has had a little makeover. It's 10g lighter, but still features Gel cushioning and offers a great fit courtesy of the FluidFit upper, plus all-over reflective detail.

asics.co.uk



UNDER ARMOUR HEATGEAR ARMOUR EXO COMPRESSION SHIRT £32

Although T-shirts aren't ideal at this time of year, this compression top from Under Armour is great worn as a base layer. Providing the benefits of compression, it is also highly breathable. Available in eight colours.

underarmour.co.uk

WILD RUNNING

WEST CORNWALL

Let **Running Fitness** take you on a journey to discover some of Britain's spectacular **MOUNTAINS, FORESTS** and **COASTAL TRAILS**, perfect for a wild run



PENDEEN TO ST IVES

Distance: 13.5 miles (22km)

Start: Pendeen Lighthouse, TR19 7ED

Finish: St Ives

Terrain: Coast path, rocky trail, track

Toughness: Challenging

Ascent: 935 metres

Navigation: Easy to moderate

Good for: Coast, history, national trail

Route info: wildrunning.net/pendeen

Access to the Coast Path is from the little car park by Pendeen Lighthouse, and the run continues eastwards along the Penwith Heritage coastline all the way to St Ives.

Cornwall offers a wealth of running adventures, with its heady mix of dramatic coastline, colourful fishing villages, white sandy beaches and windswept moorland. The peninsula is edged with some of the most spectacular sections of the 630-mile South West Coast Path, offering well-signed, exciting and varied running, with plenty of opportunities for a cream tea at the finish. In spring, the fields are ablaze with daffodils and the scent of the bright yellow gorse fills the air. Should you dare take your eyes off the path for a moment, seals can be spotted sunbathing on the rocks and playing in the surf. You might even spot a rare Cornish chough, with its bright red beak and glossy black plumage.

COASTAL CHARACTER

The cliffs that edge the sea here are granite, making for terrain that is often rocky, steep and strewn with large boulders. Many of the features of the coast path, such as the stepped ascents and descents, stiles, stream crossings and walls are hewn from this local rock and can take some negotiating, especially on tired legs. There's plenty of fun, fast running in the mix too though.

The north and south coasts of Cornwall have their own distinct characters: the Atlantic coast to the north is exposed and rugged, often feeling wild and remote, while the south coast has a somewhat gentler feel, with its pretty beaches and harbours.

There's a great variety of running, both along the coast itself and, further inland, where wooded creeks and stone-edged fields are just waiting to be explored.

THE ROUTE

Our run of the month follows the magnificent stretch of Penwith Heritage coastline along the South West Coast Path. Access to the Coast Path is from the little car park by Pendeen Lighthouse, and the 13.5 mile-run



Take in spectacular vistas on this beautiful run.

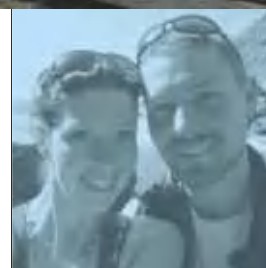
continues eastwards all the way to the pretty village of St Ives. The path is tough and technical for much of the way with rocky trails, boulders and hilly terrain, but the stunning views more than make up for it.

Bosigran Ridge (3 miles from the start) is a dramatic and classic rock climb that makes its way up a perfect granite spine from the turquoise seas that boom around Great Zawn, to the hillside above. The run ends in St Ives, with its stunning white sand, palm-lined beaches and plenty of good cafés and restaurants. There are buses to return to Pendeen via Penzance.



INSPIRED TO DO YOUR OWN WILD RUN?

Share your photos and stories on our facebook page or tweet us



JEN AND SIM BENSON

are runners, writers and adventurers. Their new book *Wild Running: 150 Great Adventures on the Trails and Fells of Britain* (Wild Things Publishing) is the first UK guidebook for those who love to run and who dream of exploring Britain's spectacular mountains, forests and coastal trails.

RF reader offer

Running Fitness

readers can purchase the book at 30% off RRP with free UK P&P from wildrunning.net using code RF15.



Pendeen, West Cornwall

Miles	Km	Directions
0.0	0.0	From the car park at Pendeen Lighthouse, access the Coast Path and head east towards St Ives
3.0	4.8	Pass Bosigran Ridge, continuing along Coast Path
5.0	8.0	Pass Gurnard's Head, continuing along Coast Path
13.5	22.0	Arrive St Ives

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Kim (front row, third from left) and the TGCR team in front of Gateshead Millennium Bridge.



RUN ENGLAND GROUPS...

THESE GIRLS CAN RUN



RUN ENGLAND is the official England Athletics beginner running project. Groups are led by trained group leaders, offering a progressive routine, people of a similar ability to start running with and plenty of support along the way. Find out more at runengland.org

This **SUPPORTIVE** group encourages women of all ages, shapes, sizes and backgrounds to get involved in running to improve or maintain their fitness

These Girls Can Run was started by Kim Scott in February last year, and has now expanded to several groups across the north-east of England. In October, the club was awarded Regional Running Group of the Year by England Athletics. Kim explains how she came up with the idea for this successful women-only Run England group: "In my late teens and early twenties I was five-stone overweight and desperately unfit. I wanted to give running a go but I was terrified of being laughed at or ridiculed because of my size and lack of fitness. Sadly, I used to run in the dark which was not only lonely but also unsafe. As my confidence grew and my fitness improved I developed a love for running which has seen me complete a number of events, my biggest achievement being the Edinburgh Marathon in 2013. "In February 2015, I found out I had a place in the Great North Run and I didn't want to train alone. I set up a Facebook group, added a few people and told them when I was running. That first run, over 20

ladies turned up but more than that, many more messaged to say they really wanted to join but were too scared. That's when I thought back to how I had felt all those years ago and that's when the idea for TGCR was born. We now have over 2000 Facebook members across all of the groups and nine groups nationwide, with more in the pipeline.

GIRL POWER

"The name 'These Girls Can Run' was, unsurprisingly, inspired by the Sports England campaign 'This Girl Can'. I began to think back to how I felt the first time I went out for a run and I realised that there were so many other ladies out there who felt the same, so I decided to make this a running group with a safe and supportive environment for all ladies regardless of age, shape, size, background fitness levels or ability.

"The amazing ladies in my group all have a story to tell, and every run I find out something about them that inspires me to keep going. These ladies

JOIN THE COMMUNITY

Share your photos and stories on our facebook page or tweet us @Runfitmag



Emma, Angela, Julie and Kim (right) demonstrate some warm up-moves at Gateshead Quayside for a TGCR event

don't want to join bootcamps, or official running groups. They want a friendly session which is welcoming, supportive and will help them to celebrate their success and recognise their progress. That is exactly what TGCR has grown into and I'm so proud of that.

WHERE WE RUN

"We run at various locations across the north-east of England, usually meeting at community or sports centres, parks, running tracks, nature reserves and the beach. We also have a sister group running in Bristol. We run weekly beginners sessions and 10 week courses, regular 5-10k runs, hill sessions, speed drills, fun sessions with team games, and long training runs.

"There is a vast range of running abilities across the group. Some women are totally new to running and start with a beginners course, some are running to improve fitness and others are able runners who enjoy the social aspect and motivation of running with a group. As we run a variety of sessions during the week runners tend to join the group they feel most suited to, although we do have regular mixed ability sessions where we have 2-3 run group leaders spaced throughout the group to monitor everyone's wellbeing during the run.

"We regularly participate in charity and memorial 5-10k runs as a group, including Race for Life and Movember, and we also organise our own bi-annual celebration group runs at iconic locations such as Newcastle Quayside.

"Our members say we are special because we help them realise just what they are capable of achieving!"

Essential info

Please describe the group in three words...

Inspirational, empowering and fun.

What is your annual highlight?

Our birthday celebration event! We organise a run at a landmark location in the north-east of England and we all meet and try to accumulate a set number of miles as a team (for example, a mile for every day the group has been running). And of course we celebrate afterwards with a non-running related night out!

If your group was an athlete, who would it be?

Kathrine Switzer, the first woman to run a marathon. She ran the Boston Marathon in 1967 despite race officials trying to physically remove her from the course. At that time women were deemed too 'fragile' to participate in the marathon distance.

How many members do you have?

Over 500. Usually 30 runners come to each individual session.

Age range?

Our youngest member is 12 and our oldest member is 64!

How many weekly training sessions do you hold?

A minimum of 3 sessions a week at the different locations.

*thesegirlscanrun.
weebly.com*

TESTIMONIALS

Angela: "I have made some lifelong friends through the group, and Kim has persuaded me to gain my UK Athletics Leadership in Running Fitness qualification. My running technique, pace and stamina has improved dramatically, and I felt confident enough to enter my first local half marathon, the Great North Run! It really has made a huge impact to my life!

Andrea: "I never thought running would be for me, but I'm up to session six, and I can now run five to six minutes without stopping. When I first started I'd be lucky to get to one minute. I'm really happy with the progress I've made so far, and I couldn't ask for a nicer supportive team and trainers in Kim and Julie."

Michelle: "Last year I ran and trained for the Great North Run by myself and it was hard. I dreaded going out for every run on my own. This year I'm running it with my 17-year-old daughter and since joining this group we love meeting up with everyone to run. It's something we can do together. Well, we arrive together but Bekah leaves me in her wake and that is now not a problem as I always have someone to run alongside. I've met some lovely ladies in the process."

Jo: "I hadn't run for a while and was reluctant to join a group as I thought they would all be fast runners. At first I struggled to run a mile; the first mile is always the hardest for me but Kim and the other girls are so encouraging they help you get through it."



Nominate your group by emailing rf.ed@kelsey.co.uk (making the subject 'Run England').





5 BEST SCENIC HALF MARATHONS

Looking for a race **WITH A VIEW?** We've picked some of the most picturesque and interesting routes on offer in 2016

The Camelot Challenge through the Dorset countryside is open to runners and walkers

2



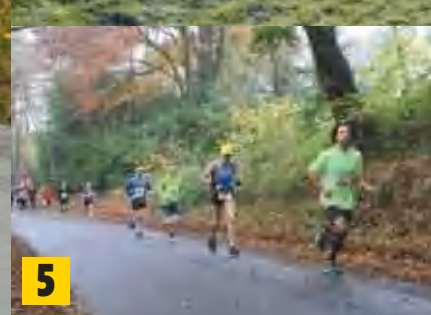
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4



5



1 CAMELOT CHALLENGE

WHERE: Dorset, UK

WHEN: 17 Sept 2016

FEATURES: Held in the Vale of Camelot, the challenging parts of this race are the four evil hills en route. Run along fields, tracks, wooded roads, through streams, through two fords, along two ridges and up the steep walls of an ancient castle, once home to Countess Gytha mother of King Harold. Everyone is welcome – runners and walkers, canicross runners with their dogs (who now have their own start time) and even horses who share part of the route. There is a cake competition for the entrants, a free lunch at the half-way point, with mountains of cake for everyone (including the dogs and horses!) and then more cake at the end. All race profits go to the Royal National Children's Foundation.

RACE INFO: eventbrite.co.uk/e/camelot-challenge-2016-tickets-18758160162

2

KESWICK HALF

WHERE: Keswick, Lake District, UK
WHEN: 1 May 2016

FEATURES: A stunning and challenging trail half around Derwent Water and the surrounding valleys and hills with an extra loop into the Newlands valley. The

scenery is like tonic, and there are prizes for podium winners as well as Master age-group winners. Another low-key, friendly event and one the whole family will enjoy supporting.

RACE INFO: keswickhalfmarathon.co.uk

3

HADRIAN'S WALL HALF MARATHON

WHERE: Northumberland, UK
WHEN: 26 June 2016

FEATURES: Set on a World Heritage site, close to Hadrian's Wall with spectacular, sweeping views, a relaxed atmosphere and friendly support. The route is circular, has just over 300m of elevation (pace yourself!) and takes you over 13.2 miles of mixed terrain – grass paths, forest track and about four miles of country roads. The race is now in its sixth year, and attracts runners worldwide who enjoy the breathtaking scenery and challenging run, says race director Ian.

RACE INFO: born4running.co.uk/hadrianhalf/index.html

4

SALISBURY 54321

WHERE: Salisbury, UK
WHEN: 14 August 2016

FEATURES: A scenic mixed-terrain half marathon that takes you through a city voted as one of Lonely Planet's 2015 top

10 cities to visit. It's low-key, friendly, and gives you a good dose of the great outdoors. The start and finish is on the edge of the city, and the course loops through fields, along towpaths, footpaths, under and over bridges, and down country lanes. The whole family can enjoy this event as six walking options are available too. Visit the website to find out about all the different distances and races. Act fast – this race sold out very quickly this year!

RACE INFO: salisbury54321.com

5

DOWNTON HALF MARATHON

WHERE: Wiltshire, UK
WHEN: Nov 2016

FEATURES: Start in The Borough, Downton and meander over bridges, down country lanes and up over Castle Hill, with sweeping rural views. It's an all-road race with a few climbs but nothing too demanding. Chip-timing, prizes for place winners and master winners, tasty soup/roll for all finishers, and a friendly crowd to cheer you home. Plenty of nearby parking and good spectator areas too. You've got plenty of time to train for this one, so go for it!

RACE INFO: racenewforest.co.uk/half-marathons



1

Preparing for Edinburgh Marathon 2016

Join us as we follow our Roving Reporter and competition winner **BILL STEVENSON** as he prepares for the Edinburgh Marathon on 29 May 2016

NAME: Bill Stevenson

AGE: Old enough to know better (53)

OCCUPATION: Senior site supervisor at a school and runs an oven cleaning business

BACKGROUND: I was quite late when I came to running, not starting until I was in my mid 40s. My first race (5 miles), took me 49 minutes and nearly killed me. I was back the following year and did the race in 36 minutes, which shows how anyone can improve with training. I'm an exiled Aberdonian who has lived in Stoke-on-Trent for more than 25 years.

North Staffordshire often gets a bad press, but nothing negative can be said about running in the region. There is large and vibrant running community in the area, with lots of running clubs and many well-run local races. There is a local league (nsrra.org.uk) where runners are graded according to times. This means that even old plodders like myself can still be competitive.

In my short time running, I've still managed 10 marathons including Amsterdam, London (three times) and one previous attempt in Edinburgh. I ran Edinburgh in one of the unusually hot years and sadly had to walk most of the last

three miles to the finish. So I have a score to settle and would love to do myself justice this time.

What has been your toughest moment and how did you overcome it?

After a bad car crash three years ago I suffered a knee injury and struggled to run for a couple of years. Eventually I had keyhole surgery to repair torn cartilage, which was thankfully successful, and I was able to get back running. Less than six months later I did the London marathon in a fairly good time (for me): 4hrs 10mins.

What are your aspirations for this journey and for the marathon?

I'm not a natural runner as my weight fluctuates between 14st and 16st. The lighter I am, the quicker I go, so come May 2016 in Edinburgh I'd like to be at the lighter end of the scale. My marathon PB is 3h 50m. I'd like to better that if I can.

What is the biggest challenge you think you'll face in the next few months leading up to the race and how do you think you'll overcome it?

Because of my weight problems I do

struggle to stay fit. I've had nearly every running injury going from jogger's nipple to plantar fasciitis (and most things in between). Everything seems to be on my left side. I paid quite a lot of money to have a thorough gait analysis done which showed I was a lot weaker on my left side. I think I had kind of guessed that anyway. Due to work issues, the most I can run is four times a week, and frankly I don't think my body can take any more. I intend to cross-train as much as possible at the gym (although I hate the treadmill). This helps keep my weight down, which hopefully will prevent injury in the lead-up to the marathon.

Tell us about your current typical training week?

At the moment I run two or three times a week, and I go for a long run on a Sunday. I try to do our local parkrun in Hanley when I can.

I'm not that keen on speed work and I try to avoid hills wherever possible! I do realise that I need to start doing quicker running and hill training to achieve my best possible finish.

Coach Sarah says:



It's great that Bill already has marathon experience. He knows what he's letting

himself in for and has some base fitness already. I don't want him to put any pressure on himself at this stage though. It's too early to be setting finish-time targets – he doesn't know how the training will go and he's just setting himself up for failure. Instead he should just focus on the

enjoyment of running, get himself organised with his long runs and other races, and let the results take care of themselves. Let's just take it step by step, with no PB chasing just yet.

Given his knowledge of his "weak" left side, I'd also urge him to work on the exercises he was given at the gait analysis to address those issues. Rehab exercises need to be done daily to be effective. Using a foam roller and massage ball in the glutes will help iron out any tight spots.

The key for Bill is injury prevention over anything else. He

must listen to his body, and get advice and treatment for any niggles. Getting the balance right between mileage, the long run, speedwork and recovery is vital. Bill needs to make sure he has enough recovery time and does just enough training to get him to the startline without breaking down. It's better to train less, but get there in one piece.

Bill mentions his weight a lot and I understand that this is a concern. It's great that he enjoys cross-training. Strength and conditioning work will help boost his metabolism, and evidence

shows that building muscle mass is important for weight management – so hit the weights Bill and stay off the treadmill.

Again though, I'd urge Bill not to focus on "weight loss" as a goal, and instead just get into a good regular running habit. Don't put any additional stress on your body and don't start "dieting". A food diary might help, which will reveal eating habits and any "reward" behaviours which are common in runners.

The key focus for any marathon runner needs to be consistency. Three to four runs per

week is plenty. Any more can lead to injury – especially with Bill's history. Slowly build up the long run in the next month – add a mile a week – and see how you get on.

MY TOP TIP:

Relax. Take the pressure off and don't worry so much about finish time and weight. I want to see him get to the start of this marathon – if he starts pushing too much speedwork or cutting down his food intake in an effort to lose weight, that might not happen.



Bill Stevenson has already run 10 marathons, but he wants to improve on his previous Edinburgh attempt



Questions for our experts

I've already said I avoid hills mostly because I'm not good at getting up them! How can I get better running uphill?

My advice is to slow down on a hill, even if it means walking. Pushing too hard on hills is demoralising and eats into your precious glycogen stores. Good technique on hills is to take smaller steps, look up and drive with your knees and arms a little more. Keep the effort the same and slow the pace. Instead of running hill repeat, try repeat powerwalking (not running) up hills as a session – try six to eight reps of 2-3 mins.

I've never taken gels during a race. I just can't seem to stomach them. Can you suggest an alternative?

Many runners have the same problem. Gels can sit in your stomach making you feel nauseous. You do, however, need some form of "carbohydrate" to fuel you during your long runs and during the race. I'd try either Clif Shot Blocks (clifbar.co.uk) or Honey Stinger Chews (honeystingeruk.co.uk). These both provide carbohydrate and electrolytes in a solid form and are more easily digested. You'll need some water or fluid at the same time, so take a bottle or camelbak on your long runs.

ROVING REPORTERS...

I DID IT! Our team of 'ROVING REPORTERS' reviews some of the events they've taken part in. Each reporter analyses the event and tells us if they'd do it again. They did it; maybe you will too?

MARLOW HALF MARATHON

Location: Marlow, Buckinghamshire

When: 1 November 2015

Club: Marlow Striders

Runner Bios



Name: Harriet Angell

Age: 58

Occupation: Pilates instructor; Leader in Running Fitness

Running ability: Experienced

TELL US ABOUT THE EVENT?

The Marlow half marathon, organised by Marlow Striders, is a popular, challenging event with 1,000 entrants. Marlow Striders have also added a new 7 mile race which promises to become just as popular as the half marathon.

The race started in Higginson Park, and immediately headed up the High Street towards a one and a half mile climb towards Marlow Common where we were thankfully treated to our first big descent. Surrounded by fields and copper-coloured autumn trees, a steeper incline suddenly appeared out of the mist ahead. But it's not all hills – there were stretches of flat winding lanes that took us through beech woodlands and farmland, giving me time to recover ready for another ascent. The last two miles are completely down hill though, which was a wonderful and welcome way to finish the race.

HOW WAS THE ROUTE?:

The route is well-marked and marshalled – some of the main roads were closed. There was excellent organisation from Marlow Striders, with lots of water stops along the way, St John Ambulance peppered along the route and wellwishers standing outside their houses. It's a great community event.

The route took us along stunningly beautiful country lanes that wind and climb through picturesque Chiltern hamlets. It was a perfect autumnal day with low-lying mists in the valleys but at the top of the hills, the sun broke through and it was glorious. However, I have run this race when I've been knee deep in water in places and soaked to the skin, so we were lucky this year.

The terrain was all tarmac. Obviously, being rural, there is some mud on the road and leaves had fallen, so in places it was slippery. But the terrain was even and good on the whole. However, given the hills, it's not exactly PB territory.

HOW DID YOU GET ON?

This is the fourth time I have run this race and my time was not as good as I had hoped for (2.15) faster than some previous attempts but slower than others! None of that really matters to me though, the atmosphere and route are very



The route goes along beautiful country lanes and through pretty Chiltern hamlets

special, and it's a life-enhancing race, which I would highly recommend to anyone who fancies a challenging, It's an autumnal, hilly half in beautiful surroundings with great organisation.

WHAT DID OTHERS THINK?

Helen Kennedy 1.59 (first-timer): "Running alongside other really determined people spurs you on and it feels as though you are all in it together, everyone struggles on the hills and it is ok to do so! The sense of achievement at the end is incredible."

Sarah Buckle 2.16 (first-timer):

"I'd toyed with the idea of running the Marlow half but the hill profile filled me with fear. I'm so glad I went for it though."





The race starts and ends along the Long Walk with Windsor Castle in the background

WINDSOR HALF MARATHON

Location: Windsor Great Park, Windsor, Berkshire

When: 27 September 2015

runwindsor.com

Runner Bios



Name: Sarah Barker

Age: 47

Occupation: Healthcare inspector

Running ability:

Intermediate

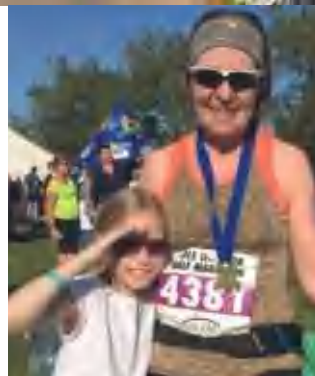
WHAT IS IT?

This year was the 33rd running of the Windsor Half Marathon, which describes itself as “the UK’s most picturesque half marathon.” As well as the half marathon itself, there’s a short children’s race and a 2.5 mile race for 10+ year olds. It’s a big race; this year there were more than 4,000 finishers, and lots of

people run for charities. Radio 2 breakfast show host Chris Evans and his team, “Yawn Patrol”, ran it for Children in Need, which probably made the event more popular than ever.

WHERE IS IT?

The race takes place in Windsor Great Park, which certainly is very picturesque. The start and finish straight is along the iconic Long Walk, with Windsor Castle in the background. In between there are two laps around the park, one short and one longer, run along smooth wide paths. Essentially it’s a road race, but in stunning scenery. The profile is described as “undulating” and it certainly is! Nothing too steep, but plenty of rolling hills



to keep it interesting and get your heart-rate up.

HOW WAS THE ORGANISATION?

The organisation is very good, although the queues for the loos before the start were some of the longest I’ve ever seen. Despite there being a large number of runners, the start pens (which were based on your estimated finishing time) worked well, and it wasn’t long before we were all through the start line. There were plenty of marshals, water stations and loos along the route, and while it was busy, there was enough space so we weren’t getting in each other’s way. The only other downside was the parking. It took a long time to get into the car park before the

race and the organisation of vehicles leaving was pretty chaotic.

HOW DID YOU GET ON?

This wasn’t my first half marathon, and I was confident of finishing, but I really wasn’t fit enough for it. As a mum of young children, I’d struggled to fit in much running over the summer, so I hadn’t done as much training as I would have liked. The race started at 1pm and with the lovely autumn sunshine it turned out to be a pretty warm day, so there were lots of supporters along the route. I recorded my slowest half marathon time but the atmosphere as I rounded the corner for the last mile and a half up the Long Walk towards the castle was fantastic. It was a race finish I will remember for a long time.

It is a beautiful race, well-organised, with a stunning backdrop and a lovely souvenir medal, and I would definitely recommend it. And it has motivated me to get back out there running regularly. Hopefully I’ll be a bit quicker next time!



**RUNNING
ANY OF THESE
EVENTS?**

Share your photos and stories on our Facebook page or tweet us



EVENTS PREVIEWS

BRUTAL RUN 10K & 5K

Now both men and women have the chance to get muddy

The Brutal women-only event in 2015 saw more than 700 runners enjoy the 5km and 10km courses. By popular male demand the Brutal team, who deliver some of Surrey's best-known mud runs, have added a men-only race on the Sunday to create a weekend-long celebration of tough running.

The 5k and 10k courses on offer take athletes across rough army land, and include all of the water, hills and mud known and loved by the regular Brutaleers. The 10k and 5k courses will provide an exciting challenge to runners of all abilities, from newbies to regular rough runners. Run solo to try to complete the course as quickly as you can, or get a team organised to enjoy a group experience.

Entry includes free parking for runners and

Date: 23-24 January 2016
Location: Long Valley, Aldershot, Hampshire GU11 2HL
Prices: 10km: **£20**, 5km: **£12**
brutalrun.co.uk



spectators, an event T-shirt, and a medal for every finisher. There will be a motivational group warm-up and easy-to-follow route marking. Canicross are welcome.

Sadie, who participated in the 2015 event, said: "It was my first Brutal, and definitely not my last! I loved it..." Claire, who also competed in 2015, said: "It was a fantastic race today. Definitely the best I have run. Even the ice-cold water didn't hamper a fab event!" Another competitor, Diane, said: "I loved it. As always well organised and challenging!"

Follow the event [@brutalrun](https://twitter.com/brutalrun) or facebook.com/brutal10



IMAGE: SUSSEX SPORT PHOTOGRAPHY

The 5k and 10k courses take athletes across rough army land, and include water, hills and mud

ASICS OULTON PARK HALF MARATHON & 10K

Get set on the starting grid of a motor racing circuit

Date: 28 February 2016

Location: Oulton Park Circuit, Cheshire

Prices: 10K: £21 (affiliated), £23 (unaffiliated); half marathon: £27/£29

(Runners of the ASICS Greater Manchester Marathon, on Sunday 10 April 2016, benefit from a reduced entry fee of £20 for the ASICS Oulton Park Half Marathon)

xtramileevents.com

Held entirely on the famous Oulton Park motor racing circuit in Cheshire, the third ASICS Oulton Park Half Marathon & 10k is ideally timed as the perfect training race for all spring marathons. It is also a great race for anyone taking on their first 10k or half marathon, and it attracts runners of all levels each year.

The ASICS Oulton Park Half Marathon consists of six laps while the 10k runners will cover three laps. The finish straight for both races is in the pit lane, and start times are 10am for the 10k and 12.30pm for the half marathon. Oulton Park's smooth tarmac and pit-lane finish promise a fantastic running experience. There are 5,000 places available and entries close on 21 February or when sold out.

Showers, changing facilities and massages are available on site, and there is free parking for competitors and spectators. All finishers will receive an ASICS technical T-shirt and a medal.



Race director Simon Hill said: "This is the perfect event for runners to kick off their road running season and for anyone running the ASICS Greater Manchester Marathon six weeks later. The ASICS Oulton Park Half Marathon & 10K is a great event for spectators to come and soak up the atmosphere while cheering on family and friends."

ASICS UK marketing manager, Cathy McGinnis, commented: "ASICS are delighted to announce we are continuing as title sponsors of the ASICS Oulton Park

Half Marathon & 10K, further strengthening ASICS' position as the runner's choice in the UK. The event is a great training run and has become a key event in the UK race calendar. We are looking forward to supporting all the runners in their journey."

The ASICS Oulton Park Half Marathon & 10K is organised by Xtra Mile Events and the team behind the ASICS Greater Manchester Marathon.

See [website or facebook.com/OultonParkHalfAnd10k](http://website.or.facebook.com/OultonParkHalfAnd10k) for further details



IMAGE: TIM WATNORTH PHOTOGRAPHY



MOREY'S PIERS WILD HALF MARATHON AND 8K

How about a seaside spring run in New Jersey?

Date: 15 May 2016

Location: Wildwoods, New Jersey, US

Prices: \$60-\$140 (£40-£92) depending on race category and date of registry

runwildwoods.com

Fancy running a scenic race in America? The Morey's Piers Wild Half Marathon combines the love of running with the

rhythm of beach life for one amazing half marathon. Set along the sights and sounds of the Wildwoods, the flat course takes runners from the stunning beach views of the coast to the action of the boardwalk.

The Wild Half Marathon was named one of New Jersey's "Top Ten Half Marathons" by Garden State Runs (gsruns.org).

The race routes for both the 8k and half marathon are fully supported with water and fuelling stations. Each registered participant will receive free rides at Morey's Piers for three days (plus discount rides for family and friends), digital training to help you crush those running goals, a beach yoga session the day before the race, a race t-shirt and added bling, an invitation to the WILD after-party celebration (with live music, hot food and cold beer) and a complimentary refreshment.

A special Wild Child Beach Run for runners aged 12 and under will be held on 14 May, 2016.

Throughout 2016, Morey's is offering running enthusiasts a variety of events. In addition to the Wild Half Marathon and 8K

in May, there will be new 5k and 10k races on 10 September, 2016,

VIRTUAL RUN

New this year, the Wild Half Virtual Run offers athletes the flexibility to compete in the Wild Half or 8K event, wherever they are and whenever they want.

Those unable to travel to the Wildwoods for the race date can still get in on the Morey's Piers fun. Virtual runners will receive an official Wild Half race bib, Wild Half T-shirt, and a finisher medal for completing a half marathon or 8K distance between their registration date and 18 May, 2016.

Runners must email their first and last name, race location and finish time to wild.half@moreyspiers.com, and share a photograph, taken while running to the Wild Half Marathon and 8K Facebook page.

See website for details and prices.

Follow the Wild Half Marathon and 8K on Facebook for up-to-date race information, training tips, blogs and more



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EVENTS LOCATOR

Inspired to take part in a race? Our **EVENTS LISTING** guide has some of the best races coming up

EVENTS CHANGES!

In order to make these listings as current as possible, we now only list events taking place within the six months following the on-sale date of each issue. Events are listed via region. If you'd like to search for events further ahead, please go to www.run247.com. As always, it's advisable to check race details with organisers nearer the date.

*The editor reserves the right to edit listings, and cannot be held responsible for errors.

EASTERN

Road
28 December 2015
BUNTINGFORD YEAR END 10
Freman College Buntingford
SG9 9BT
£17 Affiliated £19 Unaffiliated
Royston Runners
buntingford10@roystonrunners.co.uk
roystonrunners.co.uk
10miles

SOUTH EAST

Cross Country
28 December 2015
BRUTAL LONGMOOR
Longmoor Camp
GU33 6AZ
£18
Becky Russell
01482 720 459
info@brutalrun.co.uk
<http://brutalrun.co.uk/race/longmoor/>
10km

SOUTH EAST

Multi-terrain
28 December 2015
GUT BUSTER
Butlers Lands Farm
RG7 2AG
£25
Andy Macaskill
events@mysportingtimes.com
thegutbuster.co.uk
10miles

LONDON

Multi-terrain
10 January 2016
SECOND SUNDAY 5 MILES
Richardson Evans Memorial Fields
SW153PQ
£5 (£3 for club members)
Thames HandH Running Club
dssymons@hotmail.com
secondssunday5.com
5miles

LONDON

Road
16 January 2016
RUN FOR CHOCOLATE 5KM FUN RUN - LONDON NORTH
Trent Park
F3 Events
07909 915444
enquiries@runforchocolate.co.uk
runforchocolate.co.uk/
5km

NORTH WEST

Trail
16 January 2016
PETZL NIGHT RUNNER - RIVINGTON
Rivington and Blackrod High School, Horwich
BL6 7RU
£25
Epic Events
info@epicevents.co.uk
thenightrunner.com
10km

SOUTH WEST

Trail
17 January 2016
BATH SKYLINE 10KM SERIES
University of Bath - West Car Park
BA2 7JY
£16/£18
Relish The Great Outdoors Ltd
tom@relishrunningraces.com
relishrunningraces.com/bath-skyline-10km.php
10km

SOUTH EAST

Trail
23 January 2016
BRUTAL WOMEN-ONLY
Long Valley
GU11 1PZ
£12/£20
Becky Russell
01483 720459
info@brutalrun.co.uk
<http://brutalrun.co.uk/race/women-only/>
10km

SOUTH EAST

Trail
23 January 2016
TRAILScape RAIL TO TRAIL 10KM - SOUTH
Ashurst, Kent
TN3 9TE
£29.50
Trailscape
info@Trailscape.co.uk
Trailscape.co.uk
10km

SOUTH EAST

Trail
23 January 2016
TRAILScape RAIL TO TRAIL HALF MARATHON - SOUTH
Ashurst, Kent
TN3 9TE
£35
Trailscape
info@Trailscape.co.uk
Trailscape.co.uk
13.1miles

SOUTH EAST

Trail
23 January 2016
TRAILScape RAIL TO TRAIL MARATHON - SOUTH
Ashurst, Kent
TN3 9TE
£40
Trailscape
info@Trailscape.co.uk
Trailscape.co.uk
26.2miles

SOUTH EAST

Trail
24 January 2016
BRUTAL MEN-ONLY
Long Valley
GU11 2HL
£12/£20
Becky Russell
info@brutalrun.co.uk
brutalrun.co.uk/race/men-only-24-january-2016/
5km

SOUTH EAST

Road
24 January 2016
WINDSOR AND ETON WINTER FUN RUN SERIES RACE 1 (10KM)
Eton College Rowing Lake, Windsor
SL4 6QP
F3 Events
enquiries@f3events.co.uk
f3events.co.uk
10km

SOUTH EAST

Road
24 January 2016
WINDSOR AND ETON WINTER FUN RUN SERIES RACE 1 (15KM)
Eton College Rowing Lake, Windsor
SL4 6QP
F3 Events
enquiries@f3events.co.uk
f3events.co.uk

15km

SOUTH EAST

Road
24 January 2016
WINDSOR AND ETON WINTER FUN RUN SERIES RACE 1 (20KM)
Eton College Rowing Lake, Windsor
SL4 6QP
F3 Events
07909 915444
enquiries@f3events.co.uk
f3events.co.uk
20km

SOUTH EAST

Road
24 January 2016
WINDSOR AND ETON WINTER FUN RUN SERIES RACE 1 (5KM)
Eton College Rowing Lake, Windsor
SL4 6QP
F3 Events
enquiries@f3events.co.uk
f3events.co.uk
5km

LONDON

Multi-terrain
30 January 2016
RUN RICHMOND PARK 10K RACE 1 2016
Sheen Gate, Richmond Park, SW14 8BJ
£17
The Fix UK
Suite 2, 31 Ashley Road Epsom Surrey
KT18 5BD
info@thefixevents.com
thefixevents.com/
10km

LONDON

Multi-terrain
30 January 2016
RUN RICHMOND PARK 5K RACE 1 2016
Sheen Gate, Richmond Park
SW14 8BJ
£14
The Fix UK Ltd
The Fix UK Suite 2, 31 Ashley Road Epsom
Surrey, KT18 5BD
020 8144 0797
info@thefixevents.com
thefixevents.com
5km

SOUTH WEST

Road
30 January 2016
RUN FOR CHOCOLATE 5KM FUN RUN - BRISTOL
Bristol
F3 Events

07909 915444
enquiries@runforchocolate.co.uk
runforchocolate.co.uk/
5km

YORKSHIRE AND HUMBERSIDE

Trail
30 January 2016
NO EGO CHALLENGE DALBY FOREST HEAD TORCH RACE
Dalby Forest, North Yorkshire
YO18 7LT
£13
Brian Lee
07803 406070
info@noegochallenge.com
noegochallenge.com
5miles

LONDON

Road
31 January 2016
CANCER RESEARCH UK LONDON WINTER RUN (10KM)
Embankment, London
Human Race Ltd
Unit 6, Typhoon Business Centre Oakcroft Road
Chessington Surrey
KT9 1RH
020 8391 3913
races@humanrace.co.uk
http://winterrunseries.co.uk/events/london-winter-run
10km

SOUTH WEST

Trail
31 January 2016
MUD BATH 10KM, WITH HOG ROAST AND BEER
Pipley Wood, Bath
BA1 9BZ
£16/£18
Relish The Great Outdoors Ltd
tom@relishrunningraces.com
relishrunningraces.com/mud-bath-running-race.php
10km

NORTH EAST

Trail
06 February 2016
NO EGO CHALLENGE CO. DURHAM HEAD TORCH RACE
Lambton Castle, Chester le Street, Co. Durham
DH3 4PN
£13
Brian Lee
07803 406070
info@noegochallenge.com
noegochallenge.com
5miles

SOUTH EAST

Road
06 February 2016
RUN ETON DORNEY: 10K
Eton College Rowing Lake, Windsor
SL4 6QP
Votwo Events

bookings@votwo.co.uk
votwo.co.uk
10km

SOUTH EAST

Road
06 February 2016
RUN ETON DORNEY: 20K
Eton College Rowing Lake, Windsor
SL4 6QP
Votwo Events
bookings@votwo.co.uk
votwo.co.uk
20km

SOUTH EAST

Road
06 February 2016
RUN ETON DORNEY: 5K
Eton College Rowing Lake, Windsor
SL4 6QP
Votwo Events
bookings@votwo.co.uk
votwo.co.uk
5km

SOUTH WEST

Trail
06 February 2016
CTS SOUTH DEVON
Beesands
TQ7 2EN
£30.00 - £60.00
Endurancelife
01548 312314
support@endurancelife.com
endurancelife.com/
10miles

SOUTH EAST

Trail
13 February 2016
BRUTAL BAGSHOT
Bagshot
GU15 1HF
£18
Becky Russell
info@brutalrun.co.uk
http://brutalrun.co.uk/race/bagshot/
10km

LONDON

Multi-terrain
14 February 2016
SECOND SUNDAY 5 MILES
Richardson Evans Memorial Fields, Wimbledon
Common
SW153PQ
£5 (£3 for club members)
Thames HandH Running Club
dssymons@hotmail.com
secondsunday5.com
5miles

SOUTH EAST

Road
14 February 2016
DEAL HALF MARATHON
Fowlmead Country Park
CT14 0BF

Deal Tri
dealtri.co.uk
13.1miles

SOUTH WEST

Trail
14 February 2016
BATH SKYLINE 10KM SERIES
University of Bath - West Car Park
BA2 7JY
£16/£18
Relish The Great Outdoors Ltd
tom@relishrunningraces.com
relishrunningraces.com/bath-skyline-10km.php
10km

SOUTH WEST

Road
14 February 2016
RUN FOR CHOCOLATE 5KM FUN RUN - BOURNEMOUTH
Bournemouth
F3 Events
enquiries@runforchocolate.co.uk
runforchocolate.co.uk/
5km

INTERNATIONAL

Sri Lanka
Multi-terrain
14 February 2016
RACINGTHEPLANET: SRI LANKA 2016
Sri Lanka
USD\$3800
4Deserts Race Series
info@4deserts.com
4deserts.com/beyond/srilanka
250km

IRELAND

Trail
20 February 2016
LAST ONE STANDING ULTRA MARATHON
Castleward n. Ireland
BT30 7LS
£50 first 50 entrants Than £65
atlasrunning
Adrian Daye, 24 Ballymacash Park, Lisburn.
Antrim
BT28 3EX
atlas@atlasrunning.co.uk
atlasrunning.co.uk
4.2miles

SOUTH EAST

Road
20 February 2016
RUN FOR CHOCOLATE 5KM FUN RUN - WINDSOR
Windsor
F3 Events
07909 915444
enquiries@runforchocolate.co.uk
runforchocolate.co.uk/
5km

SOUTH EAST

Road
20 February 2016

WINDSOR AND ETON WINTER FUN RUN SERIES RACE 2 (10KM)

Eton College Rowing Lake, Windsor
SL4 6QP
F3 Events
07909 915444
enquiries@f3events.co.uk
f3events.co.uk
10km

SOUTH EAST

Road
20 February 2016
WINDSOR AND ETON WINTER FUN RUN SERIES RACE 2 (15KM)
Eton College Rowing Lake, Windsor
SL4 6QP
F3 Events
07909 915444
enquiries@f3events.co.uk
f3events.co.uk
15km

SOUTH EAST

Road
20 February 2016
WINDSOR AND ETON WINTER FUN RUN SERIES RACE 2 (20KM)
Eton College Rowing Lake, Windsor
SL4 6QP
F3 Events
07909 915444
enquiries@f3events.co.uk
f3events.co.uk
20km

SOUTH EAST

Road
20 February 2016
WINDSOR AND ETON WINTER FUN RUN SERIES RACE 2 (5KM)
Eton College Rowing Lake, Windsor
SL4 6QP
F3 Events
07909 915444
enquiries@f3events.co.uk
f3events.co.uk
5km

LONDON

Road
21 February 2016
THE HAMPTON COURT HALF MARATHON
Esher College
KT7 0JB
£29 affiliated, £31 non affiliated
Peter Wedderburn
020 8288 8575
kbc@blueyonder.co.uk
http://hamptoncourthalf.com/
13.1miles

LONDON

Multi-terrain
27 February 2016
RUN RICHMOND PARK 10K RACE 2 2016
Sheen Gate, Richmond Park
SW14 8BJ
£17
The Fix UK Ltd

Running Fitness

The Fix UK Suite 2, 31 Ashley Road Epsom
Surrey
KT18 5BD
020 8144 0797
info@thefixevents.com
thefixevents.com
10km

LONDON

Multi-terrain
27 February 2016
RUN RICHMOND PARK 5K RACE 2 2016
Richmond Park, Sheen Gate
SW14 8BJ
£14
The Fix UK Ltd
The Fix UK Suite 2, 31 Ashley Road Epsom
Surrey
KT18 5BD
020 8144 0797
info@thefixevents.com
thefixevents.com
5km

NORTH EAST

Trail
27 February 2016
CTS NORTHUMBERLAND
Bamburgh Castle
NE69 7DF
£30.00 - £60.00
Endurancelife
01548 312314
support@endurancelife.com
endurancelife.com/
10miles

SOUTH EAST

Road
27 February 2016
RUN FOR CHOCOLATE 5KM FUN RUN - OXFORD
Oxford
F3 Events
07909 915444
enquiries@runforchocolate.co.uk
runforchocolate.co.uk/
5km

EAST MIDLANDS

Road
28 February 2016
DECATHLON COVENTRY'S HALF MARATHON
Coventry City Centre
£23/£25
Achieve Events UK (Ltd) trading as G02 Events
0845 308 4003
info@go2events.org.uk
coventryhalf.com/
13.1miles

NORTH WEST

Road
28 February 2016
CANCER RESEARCH UK WINTER RUN MANCHESTER
Etihad Stadium, Manchester
Human Race Events
020 8391 3913

rac@humanrace.co.uk
http://winterunseries.co.uk/
10km

LONDON

Road
05 March 2016
SUPERNOVA 5K - QUEEN ELIZABETH OLYMPIC PARK, LONDON
Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park, London
E20 2ST
GSI Events Ltd.
info@gmail.com
supernovarun.com
5km

NORTH WEST

Multi-terrain
05 March 2016
NITRO NORTH 2016
Clwyd forest North Wales
CH7 5LH
£20 individual, £16/person teams of 4+
Graeme Corlett
07779 580655
info@thisonecounts.co.uk
thisonecounts.co.uk/eventsandraces.htm
10km

SOUTH EAST

Road
05 March 2016
RUN ETON DORNEY: 10K
Eton College Rowing Lake, Windsor
SL4 6QP
Votwo Events
bookings@votwo.co.uk
votwo.co.uk
10km

SOUTH EAST

Road
05 March 2016
RUN ETON DORNEY: 20K
Eton College Rowing Lake, Windsor
SL4 6QP
Votwo Events
bookings@votwo.co.uk
http://www.votwo.co.uk
20km

SOUTH EAST

Road
05 March 2016
RUN ETON DORNEY: 5K
Eton College Rowing Lake, Windsor
SL4 6QP
Votwo Events
bookings@votwo.co.uk
votwo.co.uk
5km

SOUTH EAST

Road
05 March 2016
RUN FOR CHOCOLATE 5KM FUN RUN - READING
Reading
F3 Events
07909 915444

enquiries@runforchocolate.co.uk
runforchocolate.co.uk/
5km

SOUTH EAST

Trail
05 March 2016
TRAILScape RAIL TO TRAIL 10KM - WEST
Wendover, Buckinghamshire
HP22 6EG
£29.50
Trailscape
info@Trailscape.co.uk
Trailscape.co.uk
10km

SOUTH EAST

Trail
05 March 2016
TRAILScape RAIL TO TRAIL HALF MARATHON - WEST
Wendover, Buckinghamshire
HP22 6EG
£35
Trailscape
info@Trailscape.co.uk
Trailscape.co.uk
13.1miles

SOUTH EAST

Trail
05 March 2016
TRAILScape RAIL TO TRAIL MARATHON - WEST
Wendover, Buckinghamshire
HP22 6EG
£40
Trailscape
info@Trailscape.co.uk
Trailscape.co.uk
26.2miles

SOUTH WEST

Trail
05 March 2016
MUDMAN
MOD Army Military Training Ground, Camberley,
Surrey
£25
Human Race Events
rac@humanrace.co.uk
http://humanrace.co.uk/events/off-Road/
mudman
10miles

WEST MIDLANDS

Trail
05 March 2016
MASH MARCH MADNESS 10K 2016
Brindley Bottom, Cannock Chase
WS12 4PW
£15.00
Mash Running
support@mashrunning.co.uk
mashrunning.co.uk
10km

SCOTLAND

Road
06 March 2016

DOWN BY THE RIVER

Cambuslang Sports Club.
G73.
£3.00.saf.£5.00 non
Owen Reid
0141 647 2003
owenreid@hotmail.co.uk
cambuslangharriers.org
3miles

SOUTH EAST

Road
06 March 2016
MILTON KEYNES FESTIVAL OF RUNNING 10K
Milton Keynes Xscape
MK9 3XS
£14
Inmotion Sport
63, Hanworth Rd. Hampton Middx.
TW12 3EA
info@mkrun.co.uk
mkrun.co.uk
10km

SOUTH EAST

Road
06 March 2016
MILTON KEYNES FESTIVAL OF RUNNING 20 MILER
Milton Keynes Xscape
MK9 3XS
£27-£29
Inmotion Sport
63, Hanworth Rd. Hampton Middx.
TW12 3EA
info@mkrun.co.uk
mkrun.co.uk
20miles

SOUTH EAST

Road
06 March 2016
MILTON KEYNES FESTIVAL OF RUNNING 5K
Milton Keynes Xscape
MK9 3XS
£5-£8
Inmotion Sport
63, Hanworth Rd. Hampton Middx, TW12 3EA
info@mkrun.co.uk
mkrun.co.uk
5km

SOUTH EAST

Road
06 March 2016
MILTON KEYNES FESTIVAL OF RUNNING HALF MARATHON
Milton Keynes Xscape
MK9 3XS
£23-£25
Inmotion Sport
63, Hanworth Rd. Hampton Middx.
TW12 3EA
info@mkrun.co.uk
mkrun.co.uk
13.1miles

SOUTH WEST

Trail
06 March 2016

IMBER ULTRA

Leighton Recreation Centre
BA13 3PT
£30/£32

Richard Hudson

richard100.hudson@gmail.com
imber-ultra.org
33miles

SOUTH WEST

Cross Country

06 March 2016

THE WILTSHIRE SCRAMBLE - 12MILES

Spirithill Trail

SN11 9NF

£12 Affiliated, £14 Unaffiliated

Luke Shipway

8 Ernle Road Calne Wiltshire, SN11 9BT

07595 449480

info@eventslogicuk.com

http://eventslogicuk.com/event/the-wiltshire-scramble/189

12miles

SOUTH WEST

Cross Country

06 March 2016

THE WILTSHIRE SCRAMBLE - 13KM

Spirithill Trail

SN11 9NF

£10 Affiliated, £12 Unaffiliated

Luke Shipway

8 Ernle Road Calne Wiltshire, SN11 9BT

07595 449480

info@eventslogicuk.com

http://eventslogicuk.com/event/the-wiltshire-scramble/189

13km

SOUTH WEST

Cross Country

06 March 2016

THE WILTSHIRE SCRAMBLE - 6.5KM

Spirithill Trail

SN11 9NF

£10 Affiliated, £12 Unaffiliated

Luke Shipway

8 Ernle Road Calne Wiltshire, SN11 9BT

07595 449480

info@eventslogicuk.com

http://eventslogicuk.com/event/the-wiltshire-scramble/189

6.5km

WEST MIDLANDS

Road

06 March 2016

CHEADLE SPRING 5

The Cheadle Academy, Station Road, Cheadle,

Stoke-on-Trent, ST10 1LH

£8 club runners, £10 unattached +£2 for on the day entries

Mike Beardmore

Mr B Clutton 69 Thorley Drive Cheadle Stoke-

on-Trent Staffs

ST10 1SF

01538 753654

beardmore_mike@hotmail.com

cheadlerunningclub.com

5miles

EAST MIDLANDS

Multi-terrain

12 March 2016

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Rockingham Castle Estate, LE16 8TH

From £38

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hello@thesufferingrace.co.uk

thesufferingrace.co.uk/ocr/rockingham-castle/

spring/10-mile/

10miles

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Multi-terrain

12 March 2016

RELENTLESS SUFFERING OCR - SPRING

Rockingham Castle Estate, LE16 8TH

From £95

The Suffering Obstacle Race Series

07976 744035

hello@thesufferingrace.co.uk

thesufferingrace.co.uk/ocr/rockingham-castle/

spring/releantless/

19miles

EAST MIDLANDS

Multi-terrain

12 March 2016

THE SUFFERING OCR - SPRING

Rockingham Castle Estate

LE16 8TH

From £38

The Suffering Obstacle Race Series

07976 744035

hello@thesufferingrace.co.uk

thesufferingrace.co.uk/ocr/rockingham-castle/

spring/10km/

10km

EAST MIDLANDS

Multi-terrain

12 March 2016

THE SUFFERING V MUD RUN - SPRING

Rockingham Castle Estate

LE16 8TH

From £38

The Suffering Obstacle Race Series

hello@thesufferingrace.co.uk

thesufferingrace.co.uk/ocr/rockingham-castle/

spring/5km/

5km

SCOTLAND

Trail

12 March 2016

RAT RACE MIGHTY DEERSTALKER

Traquair House

Rat Race Events

01904 409401

events@ratrace.com

mightydeerstalker.com

10miles

SOUTH EAST

Trail

12 March 2016

BRUTAL BORDON

Bordon, GU35 0LG

£18

Becky Russell

01483 720 459

info@brutalrun.co.uk

http://brutalrun.co.uk/race/bordon-heaths/

10km

LONDON

Multi-terrain

13 March 2016

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Richardson Evans Memorial Fields, Wimbledon

Common

SW15 3PQ

£5 (£3 for club members)

Thames HandH Running Club

dssymons@hotmail.com

secondsunday5.com

5miles

LONDON

Road

13 March 2016

SIDCUP 10 MILE ROAD RACE

Chislehurst and Sidcup Grammar School, Hurst

Road, Sidcup

DA15 9AG

£16 affiliated member, £18 non-affiliated, £2

surcharge on day of race

The Race Organiser 50 Cliffview Road

Lewisham London

SE13 7DD

kentac.org.uk/sidcup-10/

10miles

SCOTLAND

Road

13 March 2016

INVERNESS 1/2 MARATHON AND 5K FUN RUN

Inverness Sports Centre

IV3 5SS

£30.00

PO Box 26 Muir of Ord Highland

IV6 7WZ

+44 8448 751411

info@invernesshalfmarathon.co.uk

invernesshalfmarathon.co.uk/

13.1miles

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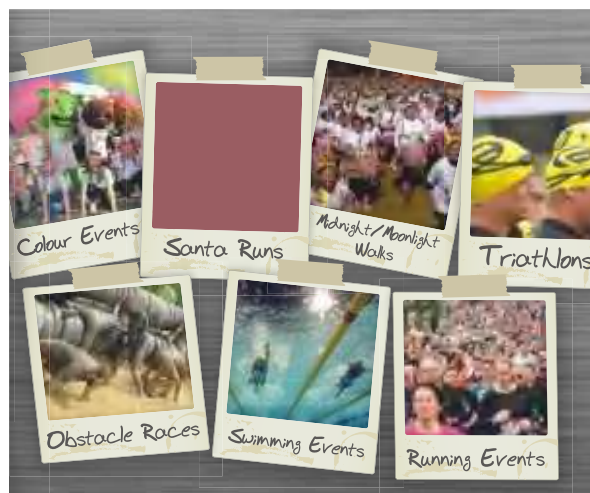
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JOHN BREWER

FINAL THOUGHTS

Is it only the genetically blessed who win medals, or can runners **IMPROVE WITH AGE?**

I have been invited to present at a conference on the limits of human performance in older athletes. I'm not sure why I was chosen, but perhaps it is an inevitable sign of the times since my earliest conference presentations some 30 or so years ago were on the training of young athletes. While researching for my presentation, I was reminded that if you want to be the best in the world and win Olympic and World Championship medals, you really need to choose your parents carefully – in other words, a champion athlete has to have the necessary genetic characteristics that pre-dispose them to excellence in a sport.

For example, Usain Bolt needed to have genes that endowed him with a stride length of around two-and-a-half metres, and a high proportion of fast twitch muscle fibres that repeat each stride at a rapid enough rate to run 100m in 9.58 seconds. Similarly, elite endurance runners will need to have the capacity for a high maximum oxygen uptake, and a high proportion of slow twitch muscle fibres, to become world champions in events such as the marathon. Of course, these genetic factors need to be combined with mental determination, great coaching and a desire to win, but without them, success at the highest level is unlikely.

SENIOR LEVEL CHAMPIONS

However as I have delved further into the physiology of older athletes and their performance limits, I have become aware that the genes that determine high-level performance in our early years are probably far less important as we get older. Take a look at some of the world records for Masters athletics, and it is apparent that they are frequently as impressive – indeed sometimes more impressive – than the record times set at Senior level by far younger people. For example, Ed Whitlock's incredible 3hrs 15min world-best for the over 80s marathon is a staggering 7min 26sec per mile, whilst Karla Grande set a



Genetics must combine with **great coaching and determination** for high-level success

blistering 13.6 seconds for the women's over 60s 100m record.

However by comparing these times with the physiological decline that inevitably comes with ageing, it suggests that many of these individuals would not have been world champions at senior level in their youth (in fact as far as I am aware, most were not). To illustrate this point, an endurance-trained individual would need to have a maximum oxygen uptake (VO₂ max) of around 50ml of oxygen per kilogram of body weight to run Whitlock's 3hrs 15min marathon time.

We also know that active individuals can restrict the age-related decrease in VO₂ max to about 5 per cent per decade, so applying this "rule" in reverse, it would suggest that Mr Whitlock could have had a VO₂ max somewhere in the mid-60s in his younger days.

LIFESTYLE AND TRAINING

While this is certainly a high value, it is not extraordinary and is the sort of value that would be found today in many good club runners. So this, and other similar data, suggests to me that the limits to human performance in older people are probably more to do with lifestyle and training, than they are to do with the genetic characteristics that play a much larger part in determining success at a younger age.

Of course there is also an element of luck involved, since staying injury free and healthy are greater challenges with age, yet it would seem that the chances of being successful and doing well within an age category will actually increase as we get older by adopting the right training methods, attitude and lifestyle. It seems the longer you live, the better your chance of become a champion.



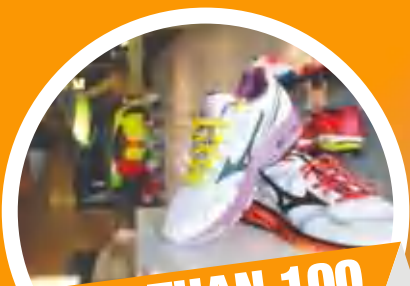
John Brewer is a Professor of Applied Sport Science at St Mary's University, Twickenham. He was previously director of communications for Lucozade Sport, and before that he was director of the Lilleshall Sports Injury and Human Performance Centre **Follow John on Twitter @sportprofbrewer**

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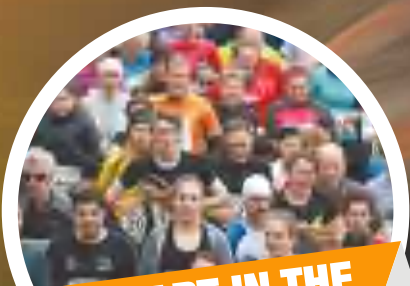
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